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Your shortcut to a great summer...

What are the things you love the most about this time of year? Sunshine; being outside more; ditching the tights and the layers and wearing lighter, prettier clothes; indulging in delicious, fresh food from the barbie (maybe washed down with a glass of something cold); pottering in the garden; and possibly the anticipation of heading off on holiday?

If any of those things sound up your street, then you've come to the right place! We have lots in this issue to fill your summer with the things you enjoy. I love our fashion team's pages this month, packed with fabulous and affordable things to wear and lots of advice on how to get your summer look just right. Whatever your size and shape, our swimsuit finder will get you beach ready in no time and, if you have a big occasion, we also have tips for restyling your posh clothes to dress them down when the party's over.

As we're less covered up, this is often the time when many of us want to get in shape (no, I still haven't lost that 10lb I keep going on about!), which is where our new two-week diet comes in. It's targeted at the area most of us want to slim down – our middles – and is so easy to follow. Do give it a go.

We also have some great discounts and treats for you this issue: 20% off Pour Moi? swimwear and lingerie; the chance to win one of five £200 shopping sprees at BHS (lucky you, as the new summer clothes collection is fantastic); and 30% off Nivea skin and sun care.

And who better to front our July issue than queen of *The One Show* Alex Jones, who has the sunniest disposition you could ever hope to find? She radiates warmth and positivity, and I'm sure you'll love getting to know what makes her tick. Happy summer!

Gaby

GABY HUDDART, EDITOR

Don't miss the August issue, **ON SALE 3 July**

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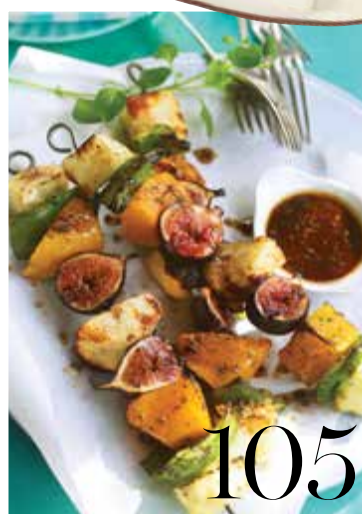


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Have your own Marilyn moment! Make an exclusive pattern



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SHIP SHAPE

These Pirate editions of Jean Paul Gaultier's scents will go down a storm. **For her**, £49.50 for 50ml; **for him**, £39.50 for 75ml, The Perfume Shop



HOOK, LINE & SINKER

Say it with a quirky limited-edition print, £40, The Calm Gallery

HURRICANE FORCE

Set the scene inside and out with flickering candles in a stylish rope lantern. **Hurricane lanterns**: large, £50; small, £25, both House of Fraser



CABIN FEVER

Transform your home into a beach house retreat with this St Ives red and white **cushion**, £11, B&Q



Prima loves

Get swept away this summer with the latest must-have nautical-inspired buys

CHIC AHOY

Navigate your way through 'what to wear days' with a versatile outfit. We love this striped double-layer belted **dress**, £14, George



DECKED OUT

Put your best foot forward in some cute striped slip-ons. All you need now is that yacht! **Plimsolls**, £25, Calzados Victoria



CATCH OF THE DAY

This quirky fish print will bring a summer table to life. **Jug**, £12, Sainsbury's

HELLO, SAILOR!

Stow your bounty in this on-trend duffle bag – you'll love the chunky canvas and rope. Captain Hawkins **duffle bag**, £25, Seasalt



‘Success matters far less to me than a happy home’

TV presenter Alex Jones talks to Prima about family, friends, an ongoing battle with shyness... and meeting the love of her life

Alex Jones, 38, is the co-presenter of BBC One's *The One Show* and lives in London with her fiancé, New Zealander Charlie Thomson.

Family Matters

I wanted to work in TV from about the age of six because everyone on children's television looked like they were just playing. But I was so shy as a child, I couldn't even say it out loud until I was about 22. I only really started coming out of my shell in the sixth form!

I'm from a family where that sort of thing doesn't happen. Life was more about getting a good job so you would be secure. Dad's an engineer and works for a ventilation company. Mum started as a cashier in Barclays bank at 18 and retired as a manager a year ago.

Mum and Dad's focus was always on me and my sister, Jen. Their main aim was to care for us and we are very close as a unit of four. But Mum always said to me, 'Never do a job you don't love because you'll be doing it for a long time.' Mum lost her own mother at a young age – she was only 15 – and she had to take care of her younger brother, who was only eight, and help run the family shop. She never wanted Jen and I to have to do that and maybe she did more than she needed

to as a result. Both my parents wanted us to be able to do what we wanted to do, so I always worked hard at school.

I looked like a boy until I was 16! I wasn't the most attractive child. I was really short and very thin – the only child who needed elastic to hold her socks up. I think it took a while to grow into myself, which is no bad thing. Mum brought out some pictures of me when I was young and my fiancé Charlie did a massive double take.

My memories of childhood are very happy. We had lots of holidays in our camper van in West Wales when we were little, then France when we were older and Mum and Dad were a bit better off.

Jen is two-and-a-half years younger than me, but she has always been the sensible one out of the two of us. She's a medical rep and lives in Cardiff and she's very practical and organised. She is also an amazing mum to two children: Dash, who is three years old, and Indiana, who is a baby.

‘My female friends have been key to me becoming who I am today’

I love being an auntie – it's good practice for having children of my own. Jen is very relaxed and lets me take the kids out to the park, which is when I teach Dash Welsh. Jen's not that bothered, but I really want him to learn Welsh. It's our heritage and being bilingual means it's easier to learn other languages. And speaking Welsh has been really useful for me.

I'm back in Wales at least once a month. I love staying with Jen because Dash comes into bed with me in the mornings for a snuggle. Mum and Dad stay, too. Plus, most of my good friends still live in Cardiff, so I also get together with them.

I was lucky to have found a group of girls at school who were all really similar to me. I became part of a big group – there's an extended gang of about 30 of us – and we're still really close to this day.

Female friendship is really important to me – my girlfriends are among my most treasured possessions. My key girlfriends are Louise, Magi, Marge, Sara and Catrin. I've known them through all the different stages of my life – the highs and the lows – and we give each other advice and are there for each other through thick and thin. They've been key to me becoming who I am today.



Fashion, beauty, exercise and me

I'm still really close to Mum – we speak every day without fail. I'll call at 7.45pm as I'm in the car going home from work and she'll either say 'I loved your outfit' or 'I'm not sure about that dress'. I totally trust her judgement as she's the most stylish person I know. She is always immaculate and when she comes to visit, I can see her despair. She'll say, 'Al, iron that shirt!' She's always urging me to start buying 'investment pieces' rather than just shopping in Primark (which I love).

But when it comes to clothes, I'm still a bit childlike. Mum will buy the whole outfit and know exactly how she'll wear it, down to her underwear. Whereas I see a nice top or pair of trousers and buy them without a plan. I do try to limit my Primark shopping, although I could go totally nuts there. Zara is a firm favourite and I also love Topshop. If I want to spend a bit more, I go for Cos, Sandro and a French label called Maje.

Working in TV, of course I'm aware of my appearance. But there's a difference between being presentable and being totally obsessed with the way you look and I really try to keep a balance. Chris Evans, one of my co-presenters on *The One Show*, laughs at me because I told him that it took me four years to realise that you look quite chubby on the telly. Everyone has a scale and I try to be on the lighter end of mine. But I do have to work at it.

I don't diet – because I don't think they work – but I try to eat well. I'll have fruit and yoghurt for breakfast, then salad or a soup for lunch. I snack on fruit and nuts, but when I get home, I'm so hungry that I'm in the fridge chopping chunks of cheese to snack on, then have a huge supper. And at the weekend, I eat what I want and enjoy a glass of wine. Life's too short to limit yourself.

I try to exercise three days a week. I feel like a caged animal in the gym so I prefer running. I also do Bikram yoga with Chris's wife, which is always a bit embarrassing because she is so fit. And sometimes I do Barrecore ballet fitness, which is so hard, but it's very effective. ➔

The main reason I exercise is because of the effect it has on my mood. My head is so much clearer and I feel much healthier when I exercise. But I'm aware that when you hit your mid-thirties, you have to make a bit more of an effort. I've not seen any changes yet, but they're bound to be coming!

I'm still shy and not the most confident person. Some people wonder how I do my job, but I always point out that I'm only speaking to one camera! My role on *The One Show* is to be the lynchpin between Chris and my other co-host Matt Baker. You couldn't find two more different people if you tried: Matt is very measured, keeps his head down and takes work incredibly seriously; as does Chris, but he's a total whirlwind. It's a very steady ship Monday to Thursday presenting with Matt, then I really look forward to Chris arriving on a Friday bringing with him a slightly more off-the-cuff approach!

I see our audience as an extended family. It's a family audience and they welcome us into their homes every day. And the thing that the three of us have in common is that we are all very family orientated. I absolutely love presenting it; they'll have to surgically remove me from that chair!

But success and money matter far less to me than a happy home. All I want to do is emulate what Mum and Dad gave us – a secure home where, no matter what has happened during the day, everything feels better.



Alex with her *The One Show* co-hosts, Matt Baker and Chris Evans

Falling for Charlie

Charlie and I have lived in our house for a year – it's definitely our sanctuary.

There's still lots of work that needs to be done. For the first four months we lived surrounded by boxes with a tiny telly. But we were actually quite happy just thinking, 'We have a house!'

We've now set up a temporary lounge, but the house does still need renovating.

We want to rip up all the carpets and get a new shower that actually works the first time you turn it on.

We recently had Charlie's parents staying for four months.

I had met them before, but only for two weeks. They live in Auckland, although they are originally English. So they speak like the Queen, but Charlie has a very strong New Zealand accent! They're really nice and we all got on. Then we shipped them off to my mum and dad and they showed them around Pembrokeshire and they all really hit it off, too. I suspect that lots of gin and tonics were enjoyed!

Charlie is the cook in our house. Partly because he is an ex chef, so he sort of has to be. But he loves cooking and he is great at it, although I'm trying to be more hands-on and I did make a vegetable chilli last night. I know I'm lucky that he cooks but, let's face it, he has the glory job! He always says to me, 'You like clearing up.' I say, 'I don't like clearing up exactly, I just feel it's fair that I do it.'

I knew pretty much as soon as we met that Charlie had potential to be The One.

It was at a Cowboys and Indians party at his house, where he lived with five other boys. I didn't want to go and only went as a favour to a friend. Charlie was wearing a poncho and a Stetson and, when we got talking, I liked him but thought, 'He's quite full of himself.' He's not actually like that at all, but that's the difference between drunk and sober – he really comes into his own after a few glasses of wine!

The next time I met him was a month later and he was wearing his friend's clothes, having stayed over at his house.

Charlie is six foot two whereas his friend is five foot 10. When he saw me, he looked a bit like he wished he'd gone home to get his own clothes.



Alex announced her engagement to Charlie live on *The One Show*

He is very old-fashioned and after our second meeting, he called me to invite me to dinner. That's him all over – like an old man inside the body of a younger man.

After our first proper date, I showed my mum a picture of Charlie. Her opinion really matters. She said, 'He's handsome, so at least he'll look nice in pictures!' And she sanctioned a second date.

Charlie and I had been seeing each other for three-and-a-half years when he proposed. I wasn't expecting it. He's very laid-back, which is lovely – and drives me mad! It's like starting up an old lawnmower just trying to get out of the house. He's quite indecisive and will deliberate for six months over whether to buy a new jacket, so I knew that marriage would be a long deliberation for him. I was pretty shocked when he popped the question.

It's tricky when you meet someone who has been single for a long time.

When we first moved in together, I would just look at him and say things like, 'Are you actually leaving that there? Are you insane?' I think it's quite a lot to ask for two people who are well into their thirties to start living together. Luckily, we can laugh about stuff. We can be in the middle of a blazing row and I'll say to him 'What did you just say?' and we'll both just start laughing hysterically.

Mum was very glad when we got engaged. She told me it would be nice if we settled down, partly because she didn't want me leaving it too late. 'More than anything,' she said, 'it's important to marry now as you only have two years left in sleeveless!'

ALEX JONES IN BRIEF

What would you change about yourself?

I'd like to have more confidence to speak up in meetings. I'm sometimes too shy to say if I disagree with something – then I kick myself for it afterwards.

What are you best at? Empathising.

What does love feel like? Warm and cosy!

What would you be doing if you weren't presenting? Interior design. I can sit for hours cutting out pictures from interiors magazines – my friends think I'm mad.

What is your greatest achievement? Presenting the BBC's flagship show for four years – and hopefully another four.

What ambitions do you have left? My only real ambition in TV is longevity. Being relevant and still there is the hardest ambition to fulfil.

Technology: friend or foe? Friend – but we do fall out sometimes!

What would you do with a spare day to yourself? Read the classics. I'm rereading *Pride and Prejudice* at the moment.

What do you order in the pub? If it's a nice pub, I'll order red or white wine. If it's a bit dodgy, it'll be a gin and slimline tonic. But always some salt and vinegar crisps.

Ideal night: in or out? Out – at a good restaurant with good company and good wine. I'm not that bothered about the food. I like the chat.

What keeps you awake at night? Everything. I'm not a brilliant sleeper and although I try hard to make to-do lists, it's easy for things to bother me if they're not written down.

What do you splurge on? Interior design magazines. And the house. I love antiques.

Last time you were really happy? This morning. The sun was out, everyone is healthy and all is well. That's enough for me – I'm the type to count my blessings.

'I knew pretty much as soon as we met that Charlie had potential to be The One'

How to get **WHITE** right

Never underestimate the power of white. Whether you decide to go for a simple, minimal shape or choose pretty prairie-style separates, you'll look white hot this summer



Summer style

BEAUTIFUL BOHEMIA

Summer dressing doesn't get easier (or prettier) than this. Go full-on girly with delicate embroidery, as the all-white palette ensures the look remains grown-up and gorgeous. Tuck in your top to give flattering definition to an unstructured maxi skirt.

Blouse, £39; maxi **skirt**, £59, both 6-18, Monsoon.

Bracelets, £8 for 4, Accessorize. Woven **hat**, £10, Dorothy Perkins. **Sandals**, £65, 3-8, Phase Eight



CRAFT WORK

Graphic broderie details are being hailed as the new modern lace – and we just can't get enough of them in crisp white. Work a skirt 'n' shirt combo to take your daywear up a notch. For best results, use statement jewellery to elevate a white outfit to max sophistication.

Cut-out **shirt**, £26; matching **skirt**, £32, both 6-22, Next. Jewelled **necklace**, £20, Daisy & Eve at Evans



WHITE SPIRIT

Nothing looks more expensive than layers of chic white. Give a full skirt a modern makeover – drape a bomber jacket over your shoulders and finish with neat and chic brogues. A little masculine detail, a lot of feminine charm.

Bomber **jacket**, £35, 8-22; **shirt**, £35, 6-18, Marks & Spencer. **Skirt**, £19.99, 6-18; lace-up **brogues**, £27.99, 3-8, both New Look 



WHITE ON

Home or holiday, for summer luxe, all you need is a pair of white trousers. And this season, there's a new shape in town – it's shorter and swishier than we've seen for a long time. Not into soft, girly whites? With a lack of fussy detail, these simple, clean lines are all you need to ensure you look cool and modern.

Textured crop **top**, £28, 8-24, Gok for TU at Sainsbury's. Wide-leg **culottes**, £18, 6-18, F&F at Tesco. **Sandals**, £79, 3-8, Phase Eight



GET SHIRTY

Ah, the humble white shirt. It's the wardrobe staple you can always rely on to get you through those 'I have nothing to wear' days! Dress it up, dress it down, team with everything you already own. And it doesn't have to be formal – wear yours with casual separates and pushed-back sleeves.

Embroidered collar **shirt**, £50, 8-20, Laura Ashley. Lace **shorts**, £14, 6-18, F&F at Tesco. **Bracelets**, £8 for 4, Accessorize ➔



DO THE WHITE THING

Move over LBD, the little white dress is our summer shortcut. Fresh white can be tricky to master, but a textured LWD is an ageless way to wear it. Forget heels... this summer is all about flats. Choose pool sliders or sandals and go for a little bit of metallic to add a touch of glamour.

Layered dress, £149, 8-18, Mint Velvet.

Bracelet, £6, Accessorize.

Sandals, £49, 3-8, Phase Eight

A CUT ABOVE

A peekaboo cutwork top is a feminine alternative to a white tee, showing a little but cleverly hiding a lot. Add a nude cami underneath if you're not quite brave enough to wear it alone. Tuck into a pencil skirt or team with tapered trousers and resist the urge to over accessorise – with pieces this gorgeous, less really is more.

Cut-out top, £34, 6-22, Next.

Rings, £19 for 4, Accessorize →



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

When it comes to holiday packing, no suitcase should be without a white cotton kaftan – it's the ultimate multitasker. Slip over your swimwear as a beach cover-up or get more mileage and layer over skinny jeans at night. Go super glam with oversized sunnies, as they always scream A-list style.

Embroidered **kaftan**, £69, s-l, Phase Eight.

Bikini top, £12.99; **bottoms**, £7.99, both 8-18, H&M. **Sunglasses**, £24.99, Mango





Summer style

ALL WHITE ON THE NIGHT

If a last-minute invite has left you in an outfit panic, give your day skirt a luxe spin and pair with a dazzling white embellished top. It's effortlessly elegant, so you couldn't feel more feminine. Natural nails and sun-kissed skin will polish off the look perfectly.

Beaded **cape**, £85, 6-18, Coast. Crochet **top**, £26, 8-20, Red Herring at Debenhams. Lace **skirt**, £95, 8-16, Almost Famous

Styling: Amanda Marcantonio

Assisted by: Helen Johnson

Photos: Romi Stern

Hair & make-up: Robyn Nissen

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size 30

Ruched, £45, 10-30,
Magisculpt at JD Williams



Floral top, £18; bottoms, £14,
both xs-l, Cath Kidston



Graphic, £39.50, 8-18, Principles
by Ben de Lisi at Debenhams



Blue top, £25; bottoms, £18,
both 8-22, Dickens & Jones
at House of Fraser



Purple bandeau, £51,
32A-36D; bottoms, £32,
xs-xl, both Huit

Hate your
hips? Choose
a suit that
is cut lower
on the leg



Green, £22,
8-22, BHS



Striped top, £65, 32B-38D;
bottoms, £30, xs-xl, both Chantelle

Fold-down
briefs can
be rolled
down when
sunbathing



Black, £78 for set,
10-20, Seaspray



MASTECTOMY
Navy, £38.99 for set,
8-16, Nicola Jane



Floral, £35, 8-20,
Marks & Spencer

On all-over pattern
camouflages trouble spots



Floral top, £8, 34B-40DD;
bottoms, £6, 10-18, both Peacocks



Up to
size 30

Coral, £35, 12-30, Liz
McClarnon at Marisota

Push-up tops + adjustable tie-side briefs = Insta-hourglass

Clever ruching will make you look slimmer in seconds

Striped tankini top, £39; bottoms, £25, both 8-18, Phase Eight

Floral top, £12, 32D-40F; bottoms, £10, 8-26, both Avon

Blue top, £70, 32A-38D; tie-side bottoms, £35, xs-xl, both Chantelle

Pink top, £42, 30D-40K; swim skirt, £25, 8-24, both Curvy Kate

A Little Black Swimsuit is your slimming superstar

Spotty top, £37, 30-38G; bottoms, £16, xs-xl, both Freya

Coral, £76, 12-24, Seaspray

Black, £68, 10-20, Seaspray

Yellow top, £75, 34C-38EE; bottoms, £35, xs-xl, both Chantelle

Padded cups will boost small boobs

Up to size 24

Floral, £30, 6-20, Next

Striped top, £24.95; bottoms, £19.95, both 6-20, Joules

Blue top, £42, 30D-40K; bottoms, £18, 8-24, both Curvy Kate

Rickrack, £38, xs-l, Cath Kidston

Chic for your shape



Yellow top, £7.99; bottoms, £9.99, both 8-18, H&M



Spotty, £78, 10-20, Seaspray



Floral top, £35; bottoms, £25, both 8-18, Phase Eight



Cobalt top, £19.50; bottoms, £14, both 8-22, Marks & Spencer



Fuchsia, £76, 32B-38D, Huit

Create curves with horizontal stripes



Striped top, £16; bottoms, £15, both 6-20, Next



Feel pretty and supported post-op in this glamorous one-piece

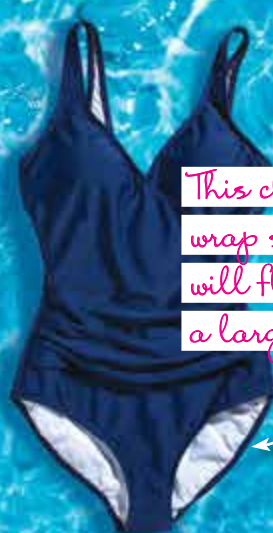
MASTECTOMY Wrap, £41, 8-20, Nicola Jane



Asymmetric, £27, 6-20, Very



Coral, £74 for set, 8-16, Moontide



This classic wrap style will flatter a large bust

Wrap, £59, 6-20, Boden



Pink, £38, 12-30, Magisculpt at Marisota

Up to size 30



Blouson top, £22, 10-20; bottoms, £14, both 10-20, M&Co

Made for
stylish days catching up with the girls



Tops
£14

Gypsy Top **£14**
High Waisted Mid Wash Jeans **£14**
Shoes **£20**

Embroidered Top **£14**
High Waisted Denim Shorts **£14**
Shoes **£18**

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NIGHT-TIME, DAY TIME... ANY TIME!

Yes, you can wear your wedding guest or summer party outfit to the office or even on holiday! We show you how to dress down your dress-ups

DRESS IT UP Want your dress to work beyond a day at the races? Go for simple shapes and gorgeous textures – and not too much twinkle. Fabrics such as lace and silk are far more versatile than all-out sequins.

You'll get more mileage from kitten heels than sky-high stilettos



Shoes, £250, 3-9, LK Bennett



Fascinator, £35, Accessorize



Clutch, £32, Debenhams

THE GLAM DRESS

Dress, £149, 8-18, Biba at House of Fraser

Necklace, £29, Mint Velvet



Sunglasses, £18, Joy

DRESS IT DOWN The easiest way to dress down your formal frock is to team it with flat sandals – a lovely holiday look to enjoy sunset cocktails by the pool.

For low-key days, just change your accessories



Sandals, £19.99, 3-8, H&M



Bag, £69, Phase Eight

DRESS IT UP Modest enough for the office, glam enough for birthday drinks, a bright pencil skirt is a winner! Mix contrasting luxe fabrics together to create the most deluxe outfit on the dancefloor.



Top, £59, 8-22, Monsoon



Earrings, £8, Betty Jackson.Black at Debenhams



Skirt, £59, 6-22, Monsoon

THE LACE SKIRT

Shoes, £19.99, 4-7, H&M



DRESS IT DOWN This stunning lace skirt will make day time basics, such as a classic Breton, look more expensive. After the party, combine delicate materials with graphic prints to give a quirky twist to your 9 to 5.



Top, £28, 8-20, Debenhams



Bag, £75, Dune

THE SPECIAL JACKET



Belt, £45, xs-xl, Hobbs

Post-party, skip the bling and add a leather belt

DRESS IT DOWN Teaming dressy evening wear with more casual day time separates is so on-trend and it increases outfit opportunities. What's not to love?

Sandals, £45, 3-9, Clarks



Shorts, £40, 8-20, Debenhams



Top, £40, 8-20, Debenhams



Jacket, £120, xs-xl, Ghost



Dress, £130, 8-20, Debenhams



Shoes, £69, 3-8, Debenhams



Bag, £79, House of Fraser

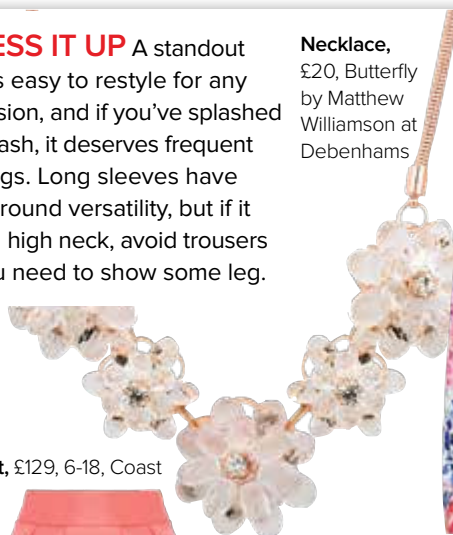


A vintage-inspired hat or fascinator is the ultimate accessory for any wedding

DRESS IT UP Worried you won't get much wear from a dressy jacket? Think again. A neutral cover-up is the ultimate multitasker. It can be mixed and matched with almost everything in your wardrobe.

DRESS IT UP A standout top is easy to restyle for any occasion, and if you've splashed the cash, it deserves frequent outings. Long sleeves have year-round versatility, but if it has a high neck, avoid trousers – you need to show some leg.

Necklace, £20, Butterfly by Matthew Williamson at Debenhams



Skirt, £129, 6-18, Coast



Sandals, £85, 3-8, Dune



THE STATEMENT TOP

Top, £155, 6-18, LK Bennett



DRESS IT DOWN You've been to the wedding and now the top is sitting at the back of your wardrobe. Recycle and re-wear it – a clash of prints will make it weekday-worthy. Chunky shoes such as wedges, pool sliders or wooden stack heels will keep the glam factor in check.

Well-loved jeans will make luxe tops casual

Jeans, £65, 8-18, Crew Clothing



Sandals, £59, 3-8, Dune



Satchel, £22, M&Co



Jacket, £50, 6-22, Next



Fab footwear

Great
value



£25, 3-8, Shoe Box at Very

£25, 3-8, TU at Sainsbury's

£69, 3-9, Boden

£35, 3-8, H&M

£69, 3-8, John Lewis

£35, 3-9, Accessorize

£42, 3-9, Next

£35, 3½-9, JustFab

£69, 4-9, Jones Bootmaker

£69, 3-8, Steve Madden at Dune

White is so
versatile and
looks great
with a tan!

➤➤ **BEST FOOT FORWARD** ➤➤
Pick a pair of sparkly sandals for pretty feet day or night – just don't forget that pedi!

GET THE LOOK... Jet-set style

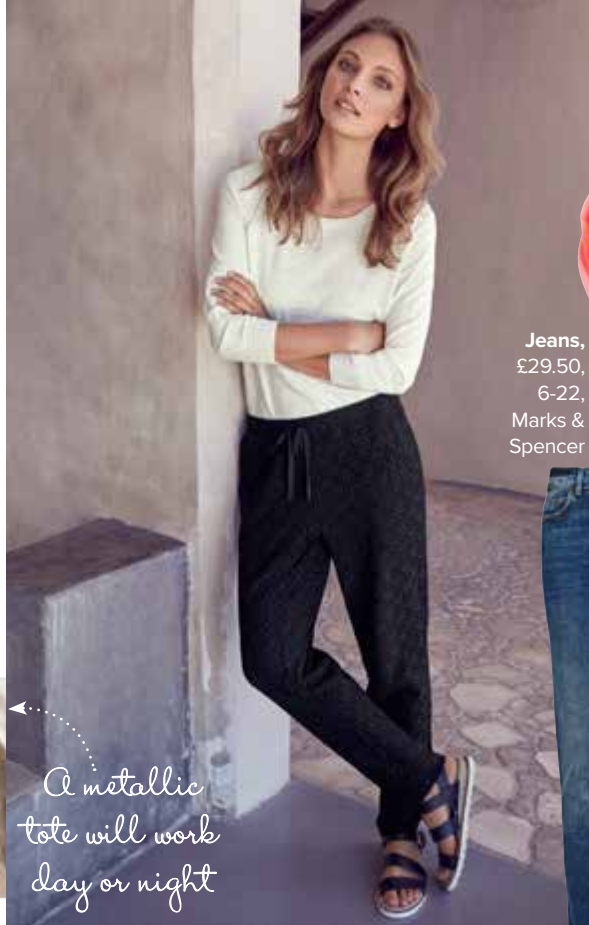
Want a comfy travel outfit that still looks stylish? It's all about modern layers that will work double time while you're on holiday, too.

RIGHT: **Jumper**, £49; **trousers**, £59, both 8-18; **sandals**, £79, 3-8, all Mint Velvet



Trainers,
£75, 3-8,
Dune

Bag, £65, Accessorize



A metallic tote will work day or night

Style solutions from our senior fashion editor
AMANDA MARCANTONIO



Jeans,
£29.50,
6-22,
Marks &
Spencer

Scarf, £15,
Taking
Shape



Cardigan,
£59, xs-xl,
Hush

Top, £49,
xs-xl, East

To help your baggage allowance, wear heavy items, such as jeans, rather than packing them

WHAT A CARRY ON

Upgrade your airport look with these bright and beautiful travel essentials...



Suitcase,
£99.95, Joules

Luggage tag, £10, Debenhams

Passport case, £45,
Aspinal



Travel bag, £40, Cath Kidston

Buy it, wear it, love it!

WIN A SHOPPING SPREE AT BHS

Holiday wardrobe need a boost? From chic poolside cover-ups to swimwear that boosts confidence, we're shopping the on-trend and on-budget collections at BHS. We've teamed up with BHS to give five lucky readers each a £200 voucher to spend in store.

● To enter, visit prima.co.uk/fashion (valid 5 June to 5 July 2015).



Just for you...

20% OFF* AT POUR MOI?

From slimming swimsuits to shape-boosting bikinis, Pour Moi? has your sunshine-ready swimwear covered. Pour Moi? is offering all readers 20% off* online at shoppourmoi.co.uk. Just quote PRIMA20 at the checkout (valid 5 June to 5 July 2015). Happy swimsuit shopping!



Swimsuit,
£38, 10-22,
Pour Moi?

Prima promotion

Modern oriental

Fashion goes global this summer at George at Asda with Oriental Dream, a stunning collection of stylish separates and printed pieces that are full of Eastern promise



Floral **tunic**,
£12. Khaki
cropped
trousers, £14.
Both available
from mid June.
Shell drop
earrings, £3,
available
from July



Kimono sleeve
blazer, £14. Cream
cami, £6. Printed
maxi **skirt**, £16.
Gladiator black
wedge **sandals**, £14.
All available from
mid/end June. Gold
coin **necklace**, £8



Cream floral
tunic, £12. Black
maxi **skirt**, £14.
Both available
mid June. Tassel
bracelet, £4

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Plazzo **jumpsuit**,
£18, available mid
June. Tortoiseshell
sunglasses,
£3.50. Filigree
silver **bracelet**, £5

BOLD BLOOMS

Wave bye-bye to pretty little posies – the new-season florals loom large! Shop the look at George at Asda, where fluid shapes, silken textures and an Eastern influence combine for a gorgeous new-season collection with a taste of the Orient. Bold blooms on kimonos and maxi skirts team beautifully with elegant, lightweight knits and jumpsuits, while a soft colour palette of elegant neutrals springs to life with pops of ochre and khaki. Shop the look at George.com, where you'll find key trends at affordable prices.

#FASHION **UNEXPECTED**

George

Exclusively at **ASDA**

Sport gave us



Sport England recently launched the This Girl Can campaign to encourage more of us to get active. And, as these four readers explain, the buzz you get from sport doesn't stop once the whistle blows – plus, it can have hidden extra benefits, too!

‘Surfing is a great escape from my office job’

Kerry Brown, 38, from Fareham, Hampshire, went away on a girls' weekend four years ago and came back with an invigorating new hobby.

Despite my thick wetsuit, I was freezing. I'd been in the sea since our first surfing lesson had started early that morning. Wave after wave had broken over my head and many of my friends had escaped to the warmth of our beachside lodge. But I figured I could sit by a fire any time – this was my only chance to get up on that surfboard.

It was April 2011 and I was in Polzeath, Cornwall, with a group of 10 friends for the weekend. After lunch, I headed back

out to sea, set on catching that first wave. And that afternoon, I finally managed to get my feet up on the board and cruise in towards the beach. It felt magical, almost like flying, and I couldn't believe I'd done it!

The next morning, my body was in agony – especially my shoulders from all the paddling – but it was worth it. From that moment, I was hooked, and when I got home I bought my first second-hand board, costing me £160. In four years, I've taken it everywhere: Cornwall, Wales and even Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands.

Since that first weekend of lessons, I've basically taught myself, picking up a few tips from friends' instructors along the way. I think pretty much anyone can surf as long as they have a basic level of fitness and

are willing to persevere. It has become a great escape from my job in human resources. I love the outdoors and count down the days to the weekend when I can get back out on the water.

Not only has it given me a whole new hobby, it has also helped me make friends and cement some existing friendships. To start with, I persuaded my friend Sara, who I know through my running club, to give it a go with me. Now she loves it as much as I do and has just bought her first board.

At Easter, the two of us headed off for the long weekend to surf in Wales, then we went to Fuerteventura on a surfing and yoga holiday. Closer to home, in fine weather we go to East Wittering near Chichester, or my favourite spot at Saunton

va-va-voom!

Sands in North Devon. The beach is huge and the waves are good, but not ferocious.

I'm not the strongest swimmer – although my wetsuit helps keep me buoyant – so my number one rule is that I never do it alone. I've found the surfing community very welcoming – everyone is so relaxed, although I'd love to see more women giving it a try. The only downside, as a single girl, is that I've found the guys are just too laid-back – and their main relationship tends to be with their surfboard!

Surfing has changed my life in many ways. I've learned that if you really stick with something and work hard, you will eventually get what you want. I've also found that a beer tastes so much better after a day of drinking sea water! ➡





'Hockey has transformed family life'

Lisa Churchill, 46, from Woodley, Berkshire, recently rediscovered the sport she loved at school – and now her whole family has gone hockey mad!

Looking around the clubhouse, I couldn't stop smiling. Not only was I glowing after an hour on the hockey field, but my four children had just finished their matches and were talking excitedly with friends. Then there was my mum Pearl, enjoying a cup of tea after an afternoon spent on the sidelines cheering us all on. In just two years, our family life had been transformed, and all because we'd taken up hockey.

I'd loved the game at school, but I left at 16 and, as so often happens, I left sport

behind, too. I had my children, Dolly, 21, Wes, 20, Tyler, 18, and Jay, 16, and barely had a moment for myself. After I separated from their dad when I was pregnant with Jay, the best I could do was squeeze in the occasional game of netball.

After Christmas in 2013, my sister-in-law Anneliese, who was a member of nearby Sonning Hockey Club, told us they were running taster sessions. My boys were fed up with being indoors and went along. And that was it. After years of me trying to encourage them to get into different sports with no success, they suddenly found the one that was right for them.

For the first 18 months, I supported them from the sidelines, and assumed my own hockey days were behind me. After all,

it had been 30 years since I'd last picked up a stick! But just over a year ago, the club held a Back to Hockey event, part of a national scheme run by England Hockey (englandhockey.co.uk/backtohockey) and I decided to give it a go.

Part of me naively assumed I'd be like the sporty 16-year-old I'd once been, but after my first few games, I was struggling to keep up and was in tears. I found myself thinking "I'm too old for this". But I stuck at it, endured a few bruised shins, and got to know the rest of the team. Soon, I started doing a few nifty tackles from my defence position, getting the ball past girls half my age, and suddenly the old buzz returned.

Now, I've traded in my leggings and T-shirts for the proper kit – special trainers, socks with shin pads and a skort – and Saturdays are all about hockey. Nothing beats the atmosphere in that clubhouse in the evening. Win or lose, we're all grinning as we dissect the afternoon's play.

The effect on family life has been huge. Although I only play on the pitch with Dolly, we all do some tackling practice at home and I love hearing how their matches went. It's something we can all share together.

Having brought up the children on my own, I think the game has also given the boys some great male role models. Standing shoulder to shoulder with men from all walks of life has given them a maturity that makes me very proud. Even my 73-year-old mum got something out of it. She was named "Supporter of the Year" last year in recognition of all the hours she spends cheering on the different teams.

As for me, hockey has helped me to feel younger and I'm definitely much fitter and more toned. Going back to the sport I had loved has made me feel that anything is possible. I may even go for a triathlon next!



ABOVE: Joining a local hockey club has changed the lives of Lisa (middle) and her four children

‘After the workout, he scrubbed up pretty well!’

It might not be the usual place to find your dream partner, but events manager Hetty Mercer, 35, from London, met her husband Tom, 35, at a mud-splattered outdoor bootcamp.

On that freezing January morning, nothing could have been further from my mind than love. Dressed in my old sports gear, covered in mud and with a bright red face after a tough hour-long outdoor workout, I looked a total state. But, just as I did after every British Military Fitness session, I felt fantastic – and I wasn’t alone. Everyone was on a real high and there was a brilliant feeling of camaraderie. So, when Tom, a guy I’d been working out next to, asked if I’d like to go to a local cafe with him and some of the others, I really didn’t care how I looked. He looked pretty dishevelled, too!

We chatted over a cuppa and hit it off immediately. I told him that I’d been going to the classes in Hyde Park a few times a

week ever since I’d moved to London from Cornwall 12 years ago. It was a way of having a slice of outdoor life in the capital – and we both agreed it was addictive.

We went for tea after the same class the following Saturday, and the one after that and, as much as is possible when you’re covered in sweat, the conversations became a bit flirtatious as we laughed about which of us had done the deepest squats or run the fastest. I’d been single for eight months and was pretty open to meeting Mr Right.

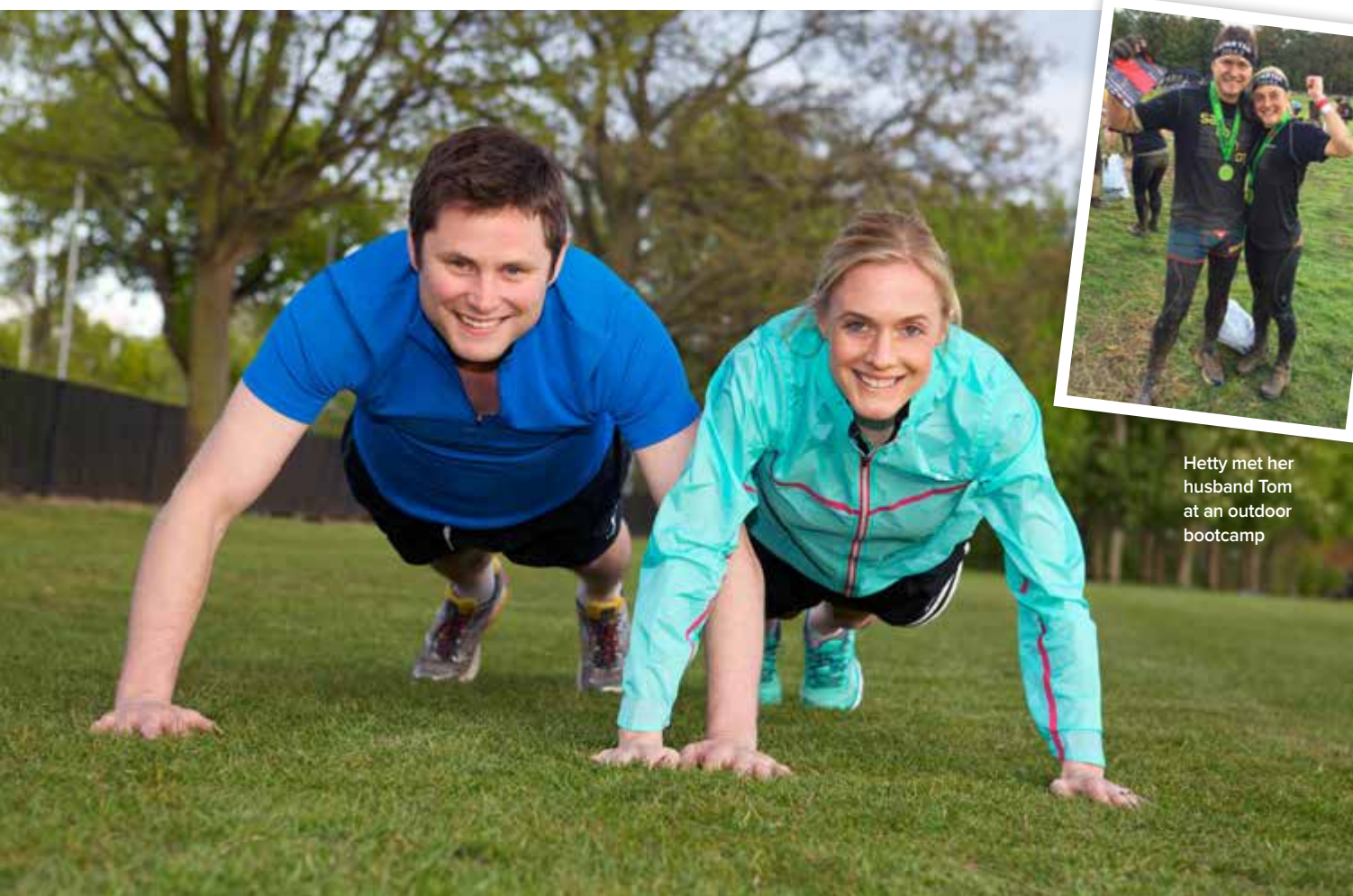
About six weeks after we met, I got set up on a date by a friend. She said her mate was totally into sport like me. I got dressed up, did my hair and teetered to the bar in a pair of heels while wishing I could be wearing trainers! And I might as well have done as, by complete coincidence, my date turned out to be the guy from my workout! Tom was as surprised as I was. And he scrubbed up pretty well, too. I could suddenly see how good looking he was – especially with

his stylishly cut brown hair, which I was used to seeing caked in mud.

We had a drink, went out for dinner and chatted until the early hours. Knowing each other from our fitness classes meant there was never any awkward silence. Because I love sport, I knew the person I’d end up with would have to love it, too – and he already had that box ticked! Getting together made me work harder at our classes – after all, in those early months I desperately wanted to impress him.

A year after our first date we got engaged on a clifftop in Cornwall and, in July 2014, we got married.

Going to British Military Fitness (britmilfit.com) is still a huge part of our lives. I know to anyone walking past that the workouts may look horrendous, but they’re actually brilliant fun. Anyone can come along, even beginners. I pay £50 a month for unlimited classes and it’s totally worth it. Sport makes you give off feel-good vibes. Maybe that’s why Tom spotted me across the park, wild hair and all! ➔



Hetty met her husband Tom at an outdoor bootcamp

'I'm a size 10 and feel 21 again!'

Thanks to cycling, Trish Cerrone, 50, from Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, feels like a new – younger – woman.

Standing on the scales, I was elated to see that I had finally reached my goal weight, and thinking back to all the cycling I'd done in the previous couple of months I can't say that I was surprised. Just three years earlier, I'd been a size 22, but now I was a size 10, fizzing with energy and slimmer and fitter than I'd ever felt. Thanks to cycling, I'd been able to shift that last stubborn stone and I had super toned thighs to boot!

Losing weight had all started on an away-day from my NHS job, walking near my Worcestershire home. As everyone else strode ahead, I was out of breath and struggling to keep up. At 15 stone, it was a real light-bulb moment. I realised that I didn't want to be that way any more and I joined a slimming club the next day.

By shrinking my portions and being honest with myself about what I ate, I was able to shed those first few stone, but then my weight just sort of plateaued. I knew getting into fitness would give me a boost, but I couldn't find a sport I enjoyed enough to stick at.

Then I read about the National Lottery-funded Breeze programme, a British Cycling initiative to get more women on to bikes. It seemed as much about socialising as speeding along on two wheels. My husband Michael was already a keen cyclist and, although I'd only been on my own bike a handful of times, I thought this could be the answer to shifting the last of the weight.

At the first meeting, I was terrified that everyone would be super fit, wearing Lycra and have expensive cycles. Then another woman said: "It's my first time. My name's Julie." She was normal, like me, and we're still great friends today.

Riding for an hour and a half was hard, but I enjoyed it and soon looked forward to our giggle-filled rides. There were usually around 12 of us and we sometimes went out for 10 miles, other times much longer.

Before long, my confidence shot up. The weight was falling off again and suddenly wearing a pair of Lycra cycling shorts didn't seem so crazy after all!

On my 50th birthday, six months later, I did the Breeze challenge, a 100 kilometre ride around Warwickshire. It's amazing how far you can ride when you're having a laugh and admiring the scenery, and it seemed a fitting way to celebrate how far I'd come since that away-day three years earlier.

Now, thanks to cycling, my core and my arms are more toned than they have ever been and you wouldn't believe the muscles in my legs! We usually go for a coffee and cake after the bike rides, but that's fine when I know I've already burned hundreds of calories.

I've found the confidence to become a Breeze leader, taking my turn to head up the rides. The group is free, so the only money I've spent is on two new bikes – one costing £700, the other £2,000. You don't need to have anything fancy, but once I was committed, the cost seemed worth it to have a much lighter road bike, which helps me go faster.

My husband and I have also made a bunch of cycling buddies, and my children, Amy, 26, and Sean, 25, are so proud of me. When I did that big ride on my birthday, I honestly felt more like I was 21 than 50!



Trish feels like a new woman since taking up cycling three years ago



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BOSCH
Invented for life

A book really can change your life!



After a series of life-changing events, Mandy Appleyard, 54, from York, found solace in what was, for her, the most surprising place

My life had taken a sudden turn for the worse. I'd always seen myself as a strong person, but as I lay on my bed in tears for the second day, feeling panicky with nerves one minute and paralysed with fear the next, I didn't have a clue what to do.

I'd never encountered so many crises all at once. My parents had separated after 45 years of marriage, my eight-year relationship had ended after the heartbreak of two miscarriages and, out of the blue, I had just been diagnosed with a serious liver disease.

My life had seemed quite charmed until this moment, but suddenly it looked like a dark and scary place. I confided in friends and family, cried and ate too much chocolate. Then my best friend Suzanne recommended a self-help book she loved, *The Road Less Travelled* by M Scott Peck. I was

unconvinced, even when she raved about how it had helped her. "Those books are full of clichés," I said.

But when I began to see a bereavement counsellor to help me come to terms with the miscarriages, he too recommended a self-help book, this time *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy* by psychiatrist Dr David Burns. Again, I was sceptical, even though he promised it would offer me techniques for a more positive outlook on life. "Trust me. Read this one," my counsellor urged.

I did – and so began my conversion to self-help books.

I devoured David Burns's 700-page, wonderfully wise book, startled by how much it seemed relevant to how

I was feeling. What resonated most was his argument that: "It is only your beliefs about yourself that can affect the way you feel. Others can say or think whatever they want about you, but only your thoughts will influence your emotions."

'It was empowering to realise that I had control over my feelings'



Simple but true, it was rather empowering to realise I had control over my feelings, rather than them having power over me. It brought me to a better understanding of my mood swings and lack of confidence; to my addiction to love and approval, and my quickness to anger and being critical.

Admittedly, while the book wasn't a magic wand, it was quietly enlightening. Encouraged, I next read *You Can Change Your Life* by Tim Laurence, which proved to be another turning point. It's about identifying negative patterns of behaviour from your childhood and resolving the issues of the past that are holding you back. I was forced to look at myself, the dynamics in my family, and the anger I had been carrying from childhood; one I wasn't even aware of. I read about

Six more self-help books that you should read when you're...

FEARFUL AND LACK CONFIDENCE

WHAT: *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway* by Susan Jeffers (Vermilion, £8.99)

WHY: This classic bestseller offers dynamic techniques to help you grab hold of your fears and move forward with your life. Susan teaches us what we are afraid of, how to let go of the victim mentality, and the secret of making 'no lose' decisions. Includes daily mantras and practical exercises to help you feel less afraid.

TOP TIP: *The only way to get rid of the fear of doing something is to go out and do it!*

STUCK IN A LIFE RUT

WHAT: *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne (Atria, £16.99)

WHY: Wishful thinking gets real! This bestseller says that if you think about something really hard, you'll get it. Want a new car? Think positively, as if it's already yours, and by what this book calls 'the law of attraction', you'll get it. Yes, really! Sounds like a stretch, but over 19 million people worldwide have bought this book, and guru Oprah Winfrey is a big fan.

TOP TIP: *There's no such thing as a hopeless situation. Every single circumstance of your life can change for the better.*

LOOKING FOR LOVE

WHAT: *Get the Guy* by Matthew Hussey (Bantam Press, £12.99)

WHY: An easy-to-read guide on how to find men, attract them and keep them interested. The author, a relationship expert and matchmaker, explains how to land a first date, establish emotional intimacy, flirt, and get what you want in bed. This is a fun read and Matthew is a likeable guide to the human heart.

TOP TIP: *Increasing the number of new men you meet each week will have a dramatic impact on your love life in just a few months.*

DOUBTING YOURSELF

WHAT: *Love Yourself Like Your Life Depends On It* by Kamal Ravikant

(CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, £3.99)

WHY: After finding himself sick, heartbroken and in financial trouble, the author resolved to stop being miserable. This short, 63-page book shares his technique – repeating the words 'I love myself' in his head all day – which he used to pull himself out of depression and back to full health. Sounds crazy? Maybe, but it worked for him, so it might for you!

TOP TIP: *Believe in yourself and love yourself intensely every day.*

WORRIED/ANXIOUS

WHAT: *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living* by Dale Carnegie (Cedar, £9.99)

WHY: This book is divided into 10 sections, each one tackling some aspect of worry and offering practical pointers for breaking out of this destructive habit. Tips include doing something good for others, being grateful for what you have and trying to live your life one day at a time. Inspiring success stories from people who have changed their ways are there to help you see the potential benefits.

TOP TIP: *Use mantras such as: 'I will be happy. I will try to strengthen my mind by learning something new.'*

BROKEN-HEARTED

WHAT: *How to Survive the Loss of a Love* by Melba Colgrove, Harold H Bloomfield

and Peter McWilliams (Atlantic Books, £5.95)

WHY: Comforting and inspiring, its one-page chapters are full of reminders, proverbs and advice for anyone trying to overcome loss. With a gentle, easy-to-read format, sections include Understanding Loss, Surviving, and Healing and Growing. There's even a 'write your own poetry' lesson. Short and sweet, but very useful.

TOP TIP: *Let yourself hurt, you will survive, you will smile again. Life really is worth living.*

forgiveness as a gateway to healing – which wasn't always easy – but I was willing to take the advice offered. And I'm glad I did.

These self-help books shed new light on me and my world, and clearly I am not alone. Behaviour change specialist Dr Michael Mantell says women find them useful to counter negative experiences. "When women have problems, they often blame themselves. Self-improvement books are an accessible way of helping them repair their lack of self-esteem."

Since then, I have read scores of self-help books and continue to gain so much from them – whether about relationships, work or health. When I look back at that difficult chapter in my life, I know the books I once held in such cynical regard helped me out of a dark place and put me on a healthier path.'

‘A straightforward life plan? That would be boring!’

With four fabulous jobs in four decades of her life, Debbie Howells, 52, shows that being flexible, taking risks and leaps of faith can lead you on a very interesting journey

‘**W**hen I finished writing my novel *The Bones of You*, I was sitting at my desk at home in Wiston, West Sussex. I remember it clearly. It was early December 2013, a few weeks after my 50th birthday. I was about to send the story out to literary agents, hoping with all my heart that one of them would like it. I held my breath, even though the best things have happened when I’ve challenged myself and been prepared to fail.

When I was little, I wanted to be a vet. But maybe I hadn’t wanted it enough because I’d yet to learn that dreams don’t fall into your lap, you have to work for them.

After university, I actually trained as cabin crew with British Airways and spent my early twenties flying around the world. To travel is truly life-changing. There’s an incredible view from 35,000 feet; one I never tired of. And there was time on those long flights to sow the seeds of an idea.

A trial flying lesson was a big step. After all, people like me – young, unqualified, female – didn’t fly aeroplanes, did they? But with trepidation (and telling no one what I was doing), I booked one anyway. I felt the magic of pushing the throttle forward, then the earth falling away beneath. I then wanted to learn to fly properly, but first I had to work out how to finance it.

I took out a bank loan – a huge risk at my age. Then, after gaining my private pilot’s licence, I took out an even bigger loan and carried on, building flying hours, passing commercial written and flight tests, and getting married to Bob – now my husband

of 23 years – somewhere in the middle of it all. We met when I was learning to fly. He was an instructor and then, as now, only ever encouraged me to follow my dreams.

After having our first child Georgie, now 21, and qualifying as a flying instructor in 1994, I left British Airways to work at Goodwood Flying School, a wonderful new job in my thirties among wonderful people. It fitted around married life and our young daughter and was pretty-near perfect.

FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS

But so much happens because of timing. If pilots’ jobs had been abundant back then, I might well have ended up flying passenger jets, but commercial aviation had entered one of its well-documented slumps. My husband was a newly qualified pilot and unemployed; there were simply no jobs.

By the time aviation turned a corner, we’d had our second child, Tom, now 18. Then Bob was offered an airline job and this is where it all changed – I stepped back from flying to focus on my children.

I was lucky that we could manage on Bob’s salary, in the cottage we rented, where I’d started to create a garden. I’d always loved gardening, but this was on another scale. And then it just so happened that one of my friends was getting married.

I helped her with her wedding flowers. And afterwards, when she suggested that I could do this for money, I thought long and hard about it. After all, I was an untrained florist and doing wedding flowers is a big deal. But her idea excited me. It was a new challenge and I could work from home.



1ST CAREER:
Cabin crew



2ND CAREER:
Pilot



3RD CAREER:
Florist



Photo: Angela Nott

Sometimes it's a matter of finding the right fit and I suddenly saw how floristry could be that. I taught myself wiring techniques and how to condition flowers. Practising my new skills, I pushed myself out there.

I won't pretend it was easy. But there are so many ways to live this life. And it's short. It's far better not to have any regrets.

Some of the flowers came from our garden, but as my children grew, so did

the business and I found suppliers. In the beginning, it was a learning curve. I had to prove myself over and over, because with weddings, there are no second chances. However, I persevered and, over the next 12 years, I did a few hundred weddings in some glorious places. Country house hotels, castles, barns... I was lucky, but I think it's fair to say that hard work helped my luck. We're talking 4am starts and

14-hour days on my feet – and at its peak, up to five weddings in one weekend!

It was during my busiest-ever wedding season that my latest career path took hold. When it comes to writing, maybe it was always there, from the stories I'd made up as a child to the letters I wrote to my best friend when I went to university. But by my mid-forties, writing was an escape from a summer of wall-to-wall weddings. It was also cathartic. Not quite a year earlier, I'd lost my mum Sue to brain cancer. I poured a lot of my feelings from that loss into my first novel, about a young woman for whom fate and losing her mother forces her to make life-changing choices.

I wrote on my days off and often through the night. Like most writers, I wrote, submitted and was rejected repeatedly. But I'd had enough positive feedback in the early stages to spur me on.

LOOKING BACK

I have a quiet, obstinate belief that if you have a dream, you're the only person who can make it happen. But I also know that, no matter how dedicated you are, at any second life can throw you a curveball and that there are other factors at play, such as timing, luck and opportunity, too.

And dreams can be elusive. My 49th year was tough, as 2013 was not a good year for weddings. While it meant I had more time for writing, I was bothered about being the mother who'd failed. My children are older now, but it mattered to me that they had a mother who had got somewhere.

Now, I'm grateful that I never got that airline job. I'm grateful, too, that no one wanted to get married in 2013 (well, almost no one!). Looking back, all roads were leading here, to this period in my life that left me writing with a new determination.

When I sent *The Bones of You* out to agents, what followed was beyond my wildest dreams. I signed with my agent Juliet and just a few weeks later, in what were the most surreal and extraordinary days of my life, the book sold at auction to Pan Macmillan. I'd finally become a published author in my fifties!

So, if you've ever wondered about that long-shot idea you have, that you've always pushed to the back of your mind, what do you have to lose? It's worth taking a leap of faith for the simple reason that, unless you try, you'll never know...'

• *Debbie's new book The Bones of You (Pan Macmillan, £12.99) is out 16 July*

4TH CAREER:

Author

The Kellogg's logo, featuring the brand name in a stylized script font with a sunburst graphic above the 'i'.

See you at breakfast



**NEW RECIPE SPECIAL K.
NUTRITION IN EVERY
DELICIOUS SPOONFUL.**

With wholegrain, fibre, and nine
essential vitamins and minerals
in every delicious flake, you can
feel special every day.

Special
K LIVE IN COLOUR



When did hen parties become a competitive sport?



Not long ago, hen nights involved booze and boogying in a local nightclub. How times have changed, laments Sam Cavitt

Recently, I was invited to a hen do. Hurrah, I thought. It's a long time since I've thrown some shapes in a sweaty nightclub (the fact that I've just referred to 'throwing shapes' shows exactly how long ago it was).

I've always loved a good hen night. I remember mine well. Actually, that's not true. But I do remember a lot of warm Lambrini, a bunch of inflated condom balloons and Madonna on the karaoke. I also remember waking up in the morning, having slept on my kitchen floor with a pizza box for a pillow, so it must have been a pretty good night.

But it seems hen parties have changed quite a lot since I was a bride. As I soon found out when the first panicky email from the Matron of Honour (MOH) arrived, asking for 'ideas'.

Ideas? I thought the whole idea was to go for a night out and have a good time. But the MOH couldn't have been more horrified if I'd suggested we should spend the evening drinking cocoa and watching *The Sound of Music*.

'Yes, but where?' she asked. Apparently, there's now an unwritten rule that every hen party has to take place as far away from the bride's home as possible. Preferably somewhere abroad. And expensive. The bride's best friend had just spent her week-long hen do in New York. The pressure was on to top that.

While I was getting over that bombshell, more emails started to fly back and forth, discussing 'the activities'. Should we go on a chocolate workshop, or take part in an assault course? Perhaps the bride would like to try her hand at cordon bleu cookery, or maybe burlesque dancing? 'Who fancies making a fascinator?' was the title of one email. I didn't reply to that one.

It seems the hen party has turned into a competitive sport. Gone are the days when it was about celebrating the bride's last night of freedom – now it's about who can have the most elaborate and most expensive send-off. And it's down to the poor bridesmaids to organise it all. As if being made to wear an unflattering strapless dress on the big day wasn't enough, they now have to come up with a hen do that puts the Olympic opening ceremony to shame. Preferably while wearing personalised pink T-shirts... or some sort of fancy dress.

'We have to make it memorable!' the poor MOH said in one of her desperate late-night emails. 'Come on, let's have ideas!'

The most memorable hen night I ever went on was when one of the bridesmaids decided to confess to the bride-to-be that she'd had a one-night stand with her future husband. I didn't think that was quite the idea the MOH had in mind, though.

Finally, we settled on paintballing in Prague. Now, I've always wanted to visit Prague, although I didn't fancy seeing it through a paint-spattered visor while wearing full body armour. But hey-ho, if it's what the bride wanted...

Except it didn't quite work out that way. Just as we were heading to the airport, the bride's twin sister went into premature labour (she wasn't with us at the time, I might add – even the most demanding bride wouldn't make a pregnant woman go paintballing!). So our plans were abandoned and instead we ended up having a great night out at a 1980s-themed bar. And, later on, the bride went to the hospital to greet her new baby niece, not realising she was still wearing a headband with a glittery pink male, um, appendage springing from it.

It might not have been paintballing in Prague, but it was a weekend to remember. And you can't buy memories like that.

'Now the poor bridesmaids have to come up with a hen do that puts the Olympic opening ceremony to shame'



‘We had a light-bulb moment’

Sometimes a flash of inspiration is all it takes to kick off a new career...

‘After being unable to stand up at a party, I knew I’d stumbled on a great idea’

For Alison Stevenson, 52, from Stubbington, Hampshire, her light-bulb moment happened when she first had that sinking feeling at an outdoor bash.

‘My parents decided to celebrate their ruby anniversary in style; hiring a marquee and organising caterers, and the whole family was dressed up to the nines. But there was one problem – I didn’t dare get out of my chair. I knew that as soon as I stood up, the thin heels on my gorgeous strappy sandals would sink into the grass and get ruined. As the speeches began, I noticed a beer bottle top on the ground and slipped it under one heel, then I asked a waiter and nabbed another. I stood up cautiously – it worked.

I’d always been a problem solver, but as a full-time mum to my daughters Fay, now 27, and Kerry, 25, most of my problems had involved homework or missing PE kits. But this idea stayed with me.

The next week, I went to B&Q and bought some CD cases and clear tubing. I started to experiment, cutting the tubing into short lengths and the cases into discs. I glued the tubing on so it gripped the heel, and eventually had something that worked.

I excitedly felt I was on to a winner so, with my husband Geoffrey’s support, I went to a lawyer who advised me to apply for a patent. I had absolute faith in my product but had no idea the process would end up costing £27,000! I used my savings and took on a part-time job in a supermarket to supplement my funds. And, in between, I found a manufacturer who could make the heel covers out of silicone for £4,000.

A year later, in 2006, I went to the Goodwood races and nervously took 200 Clean Heels Heel Stoppers to give away as free samples. Everyone went crazy for them. One woman shouted from the stands: “There she is!” Then a stampede of high-heeled women rushed over. I felt exhilarated, but only days later, my world shattered when I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I wasn’t just frightened for my life, I was also terrified of losing everything I’d worked for. So, between chemo sessions, I was at my desk – even when it was a struggle just to stay upright.

Fighting the illness made me more determined and, as orders for my heel stoppers rolled in via my website, friends and family would come over to help pack up the products. Amazingly, I recouped all my investment of £31,000 and made

a profit in the first year. Even better, the doctors told me that I had beaten the cancer – my relief was indescribable.

Then, in 2014, a researcher from the BBC programme *Dragons’ Den* invited me on to the show – I jumped at the chance. I was so nervous but it turned out to be a lovely experience. After going through every detail of the accounts, business guru Deborah Meaden offered £50,000 for 25% of my company, but I said I wanted Deborah *and* fellow Dragon Kelly Hoppen as they could both bring useful advice, so they joined together in return for 12.5% each!

Within one month, we sold over 65,000 pairs of heel stoppers from £4.99 each. Six months on, the Dragons have done so much for me – giving lots of guidance and opening doors. The product is now sold in BHS, Debenhams and Timpson, and online at House of Fraser. The turnover of the business has doubled each year and I’m now able to pay myself a wage. I work like crazy, but I have one rule – the computer goes off at 5pm for family time... even if it does go back on again later in the evening!

It’s amazing to think that in just nine years I have gone from being a full-time mum with a mad idea to having a great project with two business legends on speed dial!



**‘A researcher
from *Dragons’ Den*
invited me on to the
show – I jumped
at the chance’**

ALISON’S TIPS:
.....

1 IF YOU HAVE A GOOD IDEA, protect it – get a patent and make sure anyone you tell about it signs a confidentiality agreement.

2 AFTER YOU REGISTER A PATENT, you have 18 months before it’s published – after that the public will be able to see it. Use that ‘patent pending’ time to negotiate with suppliers, retailers and investors, preparing to bring it to market so you can stay one step ahead.

3 WHEN YOU DO MAKE A PROFIT, pour as much of that money as possible back into growing the business.





‘Every time I get an email from a happy customer, I can’t help smiling’

‘It started as a poolside fantasy’

Have you ever sat on a holiday sunlounger fantasising about the changes you want to make when you get back? Charlotte Jamme, 44, from Milton Keynes, made hers a reality.

‘Grabbing my trusty black tote, I packed everything I needed for my girls’ weekend away. We’d moved to Vietnam the previous year for my husband Philippe’s job, but often flew home to visit friends and family. So I’d become an expert in packing. The only problem was, it drove me crazy! It was a big black hole of a thing that I was

constantly rummaging through for my two children Amélie, now nine, and Mia, eight.

Later on, my friends and I were chatting around the pool about businesses we’d like to launch. “I want to design the perfect travel bag,” I said, explaining about my black tote. Then it came to me – if only it came with multiple pockets inside!

Back home, the design for my super functional bag began to come together. That’s when being in Asia really came in handy. I picked up a few rolls of brightly coloured faux leather at a market and a friend introduced me to a manufacturer. It didn’t go well – he wasn’t interested. But

there was a woman there called Van who understood it completely.

She made up a prototype and that summer I road-tested it on a trip to the UK. I could find my passport in seconds!

It cost around £2,000 to make 200 bags, which I sold at craft fairs for £35 each. Then, Philippe’s contract came to an end and we had to head back home. I had a choice – return to corporate work or keep going with my fledgling business. I decided this opportunity was too good to pass up!

The next few months were a blur as we unpacked and helped the girls to settle. But I also managed to recruit a web designer for £1,300 to set up a website for my new business, Mia Tui (meaning ‘my bag’ in Vietnamese). Philippe and I raided our savings to ship a container of bags back to the UK (costing around £30,000) and I started marketing it online and at travel shows. We expanded from the original Amélie bag to other designs, too. A friend said they made great baby changing bags, so I introduced a version with buggy clips.

However, after three years, I found myself struggling with cash flow. The bags were selling well so I couldn’t understand what I was doing wrong. I contacted an expert at a government advice scheme called the Business Growth Service and he told me I was sitting on too much stock and had too many colours and styles. He was right, so I narrowed down the stock and decided to stick to the most popular models.

After four years, we’re doing well. Last year we made £10,000 profit – not a fortune but enough to reinvest. My days are very busy, but I always take the kids to school and owning the company means I can go to events, knowing I’ll make the time up later. Nobody should start their own business thinking it’s a ticket to an easy life – it really isn’t! But every time I get an email from a happy customer, I can’t help smiling.’

CHARLOTTE’S TIPS:

- 1 **NETWORK** – join local business clubs, as you never know where the next opportunity will come from.
- 2 **CUSTOMER SERVICE IS KEY.** If someone has a problem, sort it quickly and amazingly.
- 3 **GO WITH YOUR GUT.** Your instinct is usually right.

'The idea came from looking out at a garden'

When Corinne Laurie, 61, from London, had a brilliant idea in the middle of the night, she knew just who to call – her sister Louise Unger, 55.

Back in 2005, I spent the weekend at a friend's country cottage in Oxfordshire. She had an amazing garden, but one thing spoiled the view – the garden furniture was covered in ugly green sheeting. Of course they had to be protected from the wind and rain, but did those covers have to be such an eyesore?

With a background in design, these things mattered to me! So I searched online and was surprised to see you could only buy covers in dull colours – it seemed such a simple idea to produce more attractive ones. As I went to bed, I couldn't get the idea out of my head – until finally at 2am I ended up calling my sister Louise and said, "I have a great idea for a business!" Thankfully she thought so too, and agreed to become my business partner.

At the time I was a tableware designer, and Louise's strength was in PR, sales and marketing, but neither of us knew anything about mass manufacturing! We started small, getting a photographer friend to shoot a meadow and some ivy leaves. A friend of a friend passed the images on to a contact in China who manufactured samples on plastic sheeting. And so The Camouflage Company was born.

Life hasn't been an easy ride for me – my husband Stephen passed away when our three children were young, and the years that followed were tough. But going through something like that makes you into a very determined person, which turns out to be a very good quality when starting a business! Having the idea is the easy part, but making it happen is so difficult. Luckily, our contact in China turned out to be brilliant and, over time, Louise and I also learned to trust our instincts.

Two years later, after taking out a business loan, we were at a trade show when a French man from the European store Carrefour expressed interest – later we googled Carrefour and realised it was one of the biggest retail chains in the world! We were excited but terrified, as we were suddenly producing covers on a large scale. But they were great to work with.

After three years selling under their name, we decided we wanted to build our own brand – expanding the range by adding storage boxes and bags. Our products sell best when demonstrated, so we next approached the shopping channel QVC.

CORINNE AND LOUISE'S TIPS:

- 1 YOU KNOW YOUR BUSINESS BEST**, so while it's good to seek advice, you don't have to follow it.
- 2 DON'T EXPECT OVERNIGHT SUCCESS**, but don't give up.
- 3 BELIEVE IN YOUR IDEA**. It's easy to sell something you're passionate about – we could talk about our products for hours!

To start with, they gave us a 10-minute slot at midnight. That first night, I was shaking with nerves, but four years on, we're QVC regulars. We can sell thousands of products in a one-hour slot – the rotary line cover (£20) is one of our bestsellers.

After 10 years we're making a profit. Louise and I still work from my home in west London, and we share a PA. Sisters make the best business partners – they don't run out on you, they're always honest and best of all, they get your jokes.'



Sisters Corinne (left) and Louise (right) started their own company together

Beauty for grown-ups

Super fast summer glamour

Expert Kazia Pelka reveals her beauty shortcuts for a sexy summer look

NAILS Time to ditch the darks!

Now the summer's (finally) here, it's time to move away from dark nails. But be careful, though, as some chalky shades can 'stand away' from the nails, look too obvious and, let's face it, a bit teenage!

The trick? Go for hot and super-rich shades of warm pink and coral – so much more flattering for sun-kissed skin. Match your fingers and toes for a really pulled-together look.

Chips driving you crazy? Have a long-lasting Shellac manicure for a good two weeks of salon shine! Ask your local salon if they offer Shellac manicures. **Try this:** I love the new CND Shellac Hot Pop Pink shade (left; £13.98, Amazon).

EYES Look pretty in peach!

It's easy to fall into the habit of always going for dark eyes, but they won't look right for the summer months.

The trick? Try shades of apricot and peach – it may be a shock at first, but they flatter most eye colours. Remember to anchor the tone with a little darker definition along the base of the lashes – perhaps dark brown for day and black for night-time standout!

Try this: Mac Veluxe Pearlfusion Shadow in Peachluxe, £30 (right), has all the shades you need.



SKIN Let's take the weight off!

I'm talking about not using foundation for a while and going for tinted moisturiser instead – just enough cover to keep your confidence levels up!

The trick? Tinted moisturiser is the easiest product to apply. Simply spread it evenly and into contours, fading away into your temples, chin and neck. It was invented for women who weren't confident with make-up and to satisfy customers after a natural look – so if either of these apply to you, you're going to love it!

Try this: Laura Mercier Tinted Moisturiser (right; £34, Space.NK) is a great product to keep in your handbag – it stops shine without any colour build-up. If you already have a light tan, keep things natural with a touch of concealer where it's needed – set with Daniel Sandler Invisible Blotting Powder, £19.50.

LEGS It's time for the big reveal!

Is an odd vein or blemish holding you back from uncovering your pins? Then you need concealer of a different kind to make legs look flawless in breezy skirts and barely-there sandals.

The trick? Leg make-up! In easy-to-use sprays for those who want a light cover to slightly heavier waterproofs that cover really noticeable blemishes. Remember to blend well and wash hands carefully after use. They can give a slightly flat colour, so remember

to moisturise well before use and don't choose a shade that's too light.

Try this: The Body Shop Honey Bronze Tinted Leg Mist, £15, gives an instant, natural-looking matte tan that washes off.



BODY Bring on the gloss & gleam!

Nothing says summer like a bit of a glossy sheen on your arms and legs. But beware: all-over shine is as bad as no shine at all!

The trick? Try not to slap on the shine as if it were emulsion! Moisture is the number one way to keep skin looking glossy, so remember to moisturise arms and legs, adding a little gleam in some places. Try smoothing on shoulders and shoulder blades and even under brows and over cheekbones. Trust me, enough is enough!

Try this: Nuxe Huile Prodigieuse Or, £21. Use neat or added to body lotion for a wonderful golden gleam.

SMART TIP! *If your skirt is short, try running a small amount down the front of your shinbone – it creates a polished look and a clever slimming effect.*

HAIR Turn down the heat!

Give the gadgets a break this summer and let your hair have a naturally good time with a lighter, fresher way of styling.

The trick? Put the straighteners and tongs away for a while – a hot summer atmosphere and heated stylers dry out hair. If you can't live without your dryer, at least turn down the heat when you use it. Trust me, your hair will respond with great shine and volume. Now find a product that you can run through damp or dry hair to vamp up its natural tendencies.

- **For curls**, try Living Proof Curl Enhancing Styling Mousse, £22, Marks & Spencer. It frees up an extra 30 minutes, which I would have spent styling my hair. It's a holiday must-have!
- **For dry hair**, try a lightweight leave-in moisturiser which

can revive hair that's been drying in the sun all day. Aussie Miracle Recharge Moisture Infuser leave-in conditioner (£4.49, Boots) is just brilliant – a bit like dry shampoo in reverse!

● **For oily hair**, pick a good dry shampoo, such as Dove Refresh+

Care Dry Shampoo (£4.59, Boots) to prevent oily roots from flattening your style.

SMART TIP! *Whatever you do, add earrings – it's time for a bit of boho! Try a pair that's a little larger, a little longer or a little more golden to match a warmer skin colour.* ➔

Beautiful you

LIPS It's all about coral!

Our lips have very little in the way of natural moisture and summer can often leave them cracked and peeling.

We need to sexy them up!

The trick? Turn your beauty habits on their head and do some smart summer swaps.



AT NIGHT: Create a little ritual. When you cleanse, rub a soft baby toothbrush (add a little moisturiser) over lips to banish dry skin, then slather on a rich and soothing balm – you'll wake with really luscious lips.

FOR DAY: Swap your polite pink or deep red lip colour for a super glossy coral with pinky undertones. You'll need to search for the right tone for your skin but, boy, is it worth it for maximum glamour!

3 GREAT NEW GLOSSY CORAL LIPSTICKS...



1 Lancôme Shine Lover

Lipstick in 314, £21

2 Urban Decay Sheer

Revolution Lipstick in Sheer Streak, £15.50

3 Revlon Ultra HD

Lipstick in Geranium, £7.99, Boots

And finally....

TAN It has to be golden!

No debate, skin in summer has to be golden and gorgeous. But, of course, it's vital to take care. So, while we need vitamin D, it's also important to use a good SPF. Moderation is key, so I think the perfect balance is a little colour from the sun and a boost with fake tan when you're getting glam!

The trick? I recommend you use two fake tans – one for the face and one for the body. Get some help with the hard-to-reach areas, and use a tanning mitt to blend, blend, blend! Also, wear a latex glove under the mitt – some product will seep through.

Try this: St Tropez Self Tan Luxe Facial Oil, £25, is natural and moisturising. I also like Clarins Radiance-Plus Golden Glow Booster, £19, for the body.

• For more summer skin tips, see p58

MONDAY-NIGHT MAINTENANCE

Your age-defying hand mask

Your hands are one of the places that will give your age away but, with a little TLC, they can look gorgeous – almost instantly!

Here's the recipe for success...

- 1tsp coconut oil
- 1 organic egg yolk

THE METHOD:

- Warm the oil a little until liquid, but not hot. Beat the egg yolk and add it, then whisk lightly.
- Rub all over your hands, paying particular attention to your cuticles.
- Wrap hands in cling film (you may need some help!) and leave for 10 minutes, or longer if you have time.
- When time's up, wash hands thoroughly in tepid water and pat dry. Work in lots of luscious hand cream.

SMART TIP! First, exfoliate hands by massaging with 1tsp each of soft brown sugar and coconut oil. They're both jam-packed with important nutrients, such as essential fatty acids to hydrate and nourish the skin. Rinse and then apply your mask.



For where to buy, see page 160



For every woman
there's a **wellwoman**



Original



Plus



50+



70+



Max



Drink

Whether you are looking to support general daily health or have a specific health interest, **Vitabiotics Wellwoman®** is an advanced range of nutritional products designed to safeguard your nutritional intake and life stage needs. With over 40 years of Vitabiotics' experience, there's no women's supplement range more relied on than Wellwoman.

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Holland & Barrett, GNC, supermarkets,
health stores, independent pharmacies
www.wellwoman.com

* UK's No.1 women's supplement brand.
**Nielsen GB ScanTrack Total Coverage 52 w/e 31 Jan 2015





Happy feet

KNOW-HOW

The tops of your feet are one of the easiest places to burn in the sun, so always apply SPF to avoid wrinkles and age spots.

Transform your feet with a gorgeous DIY pedicure that's just made for showing off



The sun is shining and it's time to wear those fab new sandals. But are your feet ready to do them justice?

A recent survey found that over half of us cover up our feet during the summer months because we're ashamed of gnarly toenails, hard skin and cracked heels*. However, sad feet don't have to ruin your look when the weather warms up.

'Incorporating a foot care routine into your weekly beauty schedule will ensure feet are always ready to go,' says top pedicurist Sophy Robson, who has pampered the soles of Kate Moss and Gwyneth Paltrow. She says you don't have to spend a fortune on pricey pedicures – you simply need a bit of TLC, a few nifty tools and some great products for pretty feet all summer long...

STEP THIS WAY!

1 SMOOTH THOSE SOLES

Tackle hard skin with a pumice or diamond dust file but use when your feet are dry NOT wet. Try the **Scholl Velvet Smooth Express Diamond Pedi**, £39.99, which is a revolving roller that really gets to work on removing hard skin. Then, massage a grainy scrub all over your feet and between toes, before rinsing away. 'Don't exfoliate feet when they're wet as skin can come off unevenly and you might take off more in one area, which can make feet sensitive,' advises podiatrist Michael Harrison-Blount.

2 GIVE THEM A GOOD SOAK

Remove old nail polish and then immerse your feet in a bowl of water – pop some marbles in the bottom of the bowl and run your feet over them so they get a massage at the same time. Go for warm water to soothe sore feet and improve blood flow, or make it cool to reduce inflammation if you suffer from throbbing, swollen feet. While your feet are soaking, give your nails a good scrub with a nail brush to remove any dirt. Try **Bruzz Hygienic Nail Brush**, £9.99 (Boots).

3 CUT, FILE AND BUFF NAILS

'Cutting nails incorrectly is the biggest cause of ingrown toenails,' says Michael. Prevent them, and stop nails splitting, too, by clipping each nail in small sections, rather than snipping the nail off in one go. And it's best to NEVER share clippers with other members of your family – this is a sure-fire way to spread fungal nail infections. Finally, gently smooth any sharp edges of nail into a rounded shape with a file. 'File from the edge inwards to prevent nails splitting and peeling,' advises Sophy.

4 WAXING TOES

Shhh... it's our little secret. No one need know you have hairy toes... just as long as you invest in some at-home wax strips and get rid of them pronto! Waxing is so much better than shaving, as it pulls the hairs out from the root, so they take weeks to grow back. Try **Veet Natural Inspirations Precision Face Wax Strips with Shea Butter**, £5.99 – they may be designed for areas of your face, but they're also the perfect size for toes!

5 DON'T FORGET TO MOISTURISE

'Prevent the build-up of hard skin by moisturising your feet daily,' says Michael – you'll be amazed at how it will transform your feet. But don't use any old moisturiser; foot creams such as **Margaret Dabbs Intensive Hydrating Foot Lotion**, £25 (Space.NK) have been specially formulated with intensive ingredients that penetrate the thicker skin on the soles of feet and help to prevent calluses and cracked heels, too.

6 PERFECT PAINT JOB

Before you apply polish, 'buff the surface of each nail to remove any discolouration and smooth down ridges,' says Sophy. Not only will this give a smoother base for your polish, but 'it's also effective for removing dry skin around the nail beds and at the ends of your toes,' she adds. Then apply a thin layer of base coat to protect nails from staining. Follow this with two coats of your chosen polish and a top coat and you're ready to bare all!

TOOL KIT...



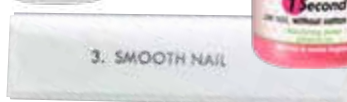
Palmer's Foot Magic Scrub, £2.49 (Superdrug)



Champneys Foot File, £9



Bourjois Magic Nail Polish Remover, £4.99



Boots 4 Way Buffer Block, £2

Seche Vite Dry Fast Top Coat, £9 (Boots)



Elegant Touch Professional Nail Clippers, £8.50



Colour for your toes!

● GO NUDE

A neutral shade such as **Bobbi Brown Nail Polish in Naked**, £11, will help feet look slimmer and more delicate. Plus, it will give the illusion of longer toes.



● MAKE IT LAST

An investment is a do-it-yourself gel nail system for a pedi that lasts and lasts. Try **Sensationail DIY Gel Nail System**, £69.99 for a starter kit (sensationail.co.uk). We love new shade Tropical Punch – it's a vibrant coral that'll look great with tanned feet.



● OR TRY THESE NEW SEASON SHADES...

- (1) **Bourjois La Laque Nail Enamel** in Fuchsiao Bella, £6.49;
- (2) **Sally Hansen Complete Salon Manicure** in Teesta Turquoise, £6.99;
- (3) **OPI Nail Lacquer** in My Car has Navy-gation, £11.50 (nailpolishdirect.com);
- and (4) **Nails Inc NailKale** in Abbey Road, £14 (nailsinc.com).



Beautiful you

Your new summer skin rules

Get your sunniest glow on in the months ahead by following our beauty editor's simple (and safe) tricks...

Flawless face

1 The gentle touch

Facial scrubs have had a bad press of late, as some can rough up the skin too much. Instead, try using a no-scrub, no-rinse, leave-on formula to exfoliate. A gentle glycolic acid exfoliator (AHA) is brilliant on normal to dry skin, and use salicylic acid (BHA) on oily or combination.



They're not as scary as they sound and really get under the skin (a scrub only works on the surface), leaving you with a smoother, healthier complexion. We love Paula's Choice products. Try the **Skin Perfecting 8% AHA Gel** (£23.50, left) or the **Skin Perfecting 1% BHA Gel** (£22.50). But don't forget to wear SPF on top!

2 Double your defence

SPF-formula daily face creams are great for protecting at skin level, but they don't protect us from the ageing

free radicals found in the sun's UV rays. The solution? Antioxidants that strengthen the skin and speed up its natural sun-damage repair process. Antioxidant beauty doesn't come cheap, but the benefits are worth weighing up as they protect, repair *and* firm skin. Wow! We love the new SkinCeuticals sets, as you get a high SPF. Try **Phloretin CF + Mineral Radiance UV Defense Set** (£150) for oily to normal skin, and **C E Ferulic serum + Ultra Facial Defense Set** (£128) on normal to dry or sensitive complexions.

3 Sensitive skin soothers

Strong sunlight and summer heat can trigger hypersensitive skin flare-ups. Thankfully, soothing help is at hand with a number of great new products...

BEST FOR: COMBINATION TO OILY SKIN

La Roche-Posay Toleriane Ultra Fluid (£17.50, larger Boots stores, top right).

BEST FOR: DRY SKIN

Eucerin Ultra Sensitive Soothing Care Dry Skin (£16.50, above left).

BEST FOR: SENSITIVE EYES

La Roche-Posay Toleriane Ultra Eyes (£14.90, larger Boots stores).

4 Blemishes begone!

After wrinkles, pigmentation is the biggest skin care worry for women. So if brown spots, discolouration and uneven skintone on your hands, décolletage and face bother you, try a skin-brightening regime.

We love the effectiveness of the new



Dermalogica PowerBright TRx Treatment Kit (£33.70).

It contains a travel-sized kit of the serum, SPF50 and night cream, so you can test them out before you commit.

5 Buy the best

Listen up! One of our favourite products is the UK's first serum to be clinically proven to deliver





anti-wrinkle results that get better over time. And it is **No7 Protect & Perfect Intense Advanced Serum** (£24.95, Boots, opposite page). Fab value for an amazing product.

6 Let your skin recover

Lighten your beauty load when you're going on your hols by leaving your daily serum, moisturiser and night cream at home. All you need is a hydration boost for the face after sun exposure (standard aftersun products take care of the body). The **Ultrasun Overnight Summer Skin Recovery Mask** (£33, QVC) will give your complexion all it needs to recover while you sleep. A holiday must-have!

7 Brush up

Want to apply foundation like a pro? Then use a brush – it's the key to a streak-free, flawless finish (and that goes for your BB cream and tinted moisturiser, too). They don't come better than the new **O! Wow Brush** (£20, Victoria Health). The bristles feel like velvet on your skin and blend your coverage beautifully. And here's another trick – make sure that you get the perfect finish by investing in two shades of foundation: your usual, and one shade darker (as your skintone naturally changes over summer). Just mix them together to get the best match.

8 Bronzer and blush

Yes, you can have both, as they each do different things. Bronzer enhances cheekbones by applying it underneath them and it really sets off a tan, too. Blush brings a gorgeous glowy flush of colour when swept along cheekbones or the apples of cheeks. We love the new **Bobbi Brown Brightening Brick in Coral** (£34, right), which combines the warmth of bronzer and glow of blusher in one. ➔





Body beautiful

9 Wash and glow

Faking a golden glow just got a lot easier! **St Tropez Gradual Tan In Shower Tanning Lotion** (£14.50, from 1 June at boots.com, top left) works exactly like the new in-shower moisturisers. Simply apply to wet skin in circular motions, wait three minutes, then rinse off. It leaves you with a natural, sun-kissed finish that deepens with continued use. Easy!

10 Bye-bye bumpy skin

If rough, dry 'chicken skin' on the backs of your arms or thighs makes you think twice about baring all, there are products that target the condition (known as keratosis

pilaris or KP). The Ameliorate range was created by a KP sufferer and really makes a difference. Try the **Ameliorate Skin Smoothing Body Lotion** (from £17.50, left).

11 Polish to perfection

Regular exfoliation and moisturising are key to making skin look its best, but many of us forget to do both routinely. Exfoliate once a week with a good scrub to remove dulling dead skin cells and promote circulation – it really does perk up lacklustre skin. Try making it your Sunday shower ritual. And always moisturise after contact with water to keep skin well hydrated and supple.

SOOTHE YOUR SUNBURN



Don't know what to do if you get burnt? Follow consultant dermatologist and British Skin Foundation spokesperson Dr Anjali Mahto's simple steps...

- 1** Cover the area immediately with loose cotton clothing and stay out of the sun.
 - 2** Anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen help to relieve the pain and should be taken for at least 48 hours.
 - 3** Have a cool shower or bath, or compress the skin with a cold towel for 15 minutes. Then use an unperfumed lotion to soothe skin. Aloe vera is great; it cools and also acts as an anti-inflammatory.
 - 4** Using a mild steroid cream, such as 0.5-1% hydrocortisone, for 48 hours may reduce pain and swelling and speed up the healing process, but don't use on children unless recommended by a GP.
- Our favourite cooling moisturisers...**



- SAVE** Sanctuary Spa Cooling Body Sorbet (£7, above).
- SPLURGE** ESPA Cooling Body Moisturiser (£34).

Exfoliators we love...

- SAVE** Dove Gentle Exfoliating Nourishing Body Wash (£2.55, Tesco). Gentle enough to use every day.
- SPLURGE** Champneys Spa Treatments Citrus Blush Salt Scrub (£12). Moisturising with a zingy scent.

12 Moisturisers with more

Ask more from your lotion. The best new moisturisers promise to firm up the skin's elasticity, too...

- SAVE** Neutrogena Norwegian Formula Visibly Renew Elasti-Boost Body Lotion (from £4.99, Boots, far left).
- SPLURGE** Murad Firming Peptide Body Treatment (£36). It has a luxe feel and is worth every penny.



Safely sun-kissed

Whether you're home or away, wearing a protective sunscreen is a must. We've taken the hard work out of finding the perfect match for your skin.

BEST FOR: SENSITIVE, SUN ALLERGY-PRONE SKIN

Bioderma Photoderm Mineral SPF50+ Spray (£13.50, Escentual, below right). Our tester loved this, saying it went on beautifully and left skin velvety soft but not greasy – and, most importantly, it stopped the sun from causing the usual rash.

BEST FOR: TANNING

Nivea Sun Protect & Bronze Tan Activating Protecting Oil in SPF20

and SPF30 (£15.99 each, below left). Sun worshippers will love these new oils. They still offer a high protection, but they also support the skin's natural tanning process with a pro-melanin plant extract to darken skin. And the light, non-greasy texture leaves skin lovely and smooth, too.

BEST FOR: WATER RESISTANCE

Shiseido WetForce Expert Sun Aging Protection Lotion in SPF30 (£32, House of Fraser, above right). Thanks to its groundbreaking formula, this sunscreen's protection is boosted when it comes into contact with water. It's pricey but worth it for sporty types and water nymphs. Plus, it's lightweight on skin.

BEST FOR: KIDS

Kids Sun Smart Sensitive Moisture Protect Coloured Sun Spray SPF50 (£10.50, Marks & Spencer). It can be a chore to get kids to wear sun cream, so anything to make it fun is a winner. This spray is coloured, making it easier not to miss a spot, but it disappears once rubbed in.

BEST FOR: VALUE

Soltan Protect & Moisturise Suncare Lotion, available in SPF8-SPF50+ (from £4.50, Boots, above right). This collection is the best yet, as it offers the highest UVA protection, which keeps peeling at bay. Super moisturising, too.

BEST FOR: RADIANCE

Piz Buin Instant Glow Skin Illuminating Sun Spray in SPF15 and SPF30 (£17 each, Boots). A great product to get you through those first few pale days before your tan kicks in. Infused with light-reflecting pearls, the spray provides a beautiful shimmer to illuminate the skin and enhance the tone – with zero self-tan. We love it!



GET SUN SMART

- ❑ Make sure your sunscreen has a high UVA protection, as well as a high SPF. These are rated with a five-star system – the more stars the better.
- ❑ Always apply sun cream generously – a minimum of six teaspoonfuls are needed to cover the whole body of an average-sized adult.
- ❑ Replace your sunscreen supply every year, as they do go off once opened and lose effectiveness over time.

• A dress to impress

Need something special for a glam summer do? Turn heads – like our four readers – with a fab frock from the high street

The flattering bodycon

KERRY NELSON, 34, from Bedale, North Yorkshire, is a head of administration.



BEFORE

GET THE LOOK

- Bodycon means 'body conscious' because these dresses are so figure hugging. But don't think you have to be super slim – killer curves are what you need to rock this style.
- This dress will show off your shape, so keep the look chic by covering up flesh with the dress length hitting the knee or just below. If the dress is sleeveless, think about layering it with a short jacket.



FINISHING TOUCHES

In a fab bodycon dress, Kerry's ready for a night out with the girls. Teamed with this **tailored jacket** (£89, Monsoon), she'll have a smarter look – ideal for the office.



If you've changed your hair colour, remember you may have to re-match the colour of your eyebrow product. On Kerry, we used **Illamasqua Precision Brow Gel in Strike** (£18.50).

Get bright red nails with **Diego Dalla Palma Nail Polish in Brick Red** (£9.50, Marks & Spencer).



Kerry wears:
Dress, £60, Star by Julien Macdonald for Designers at Debenhams. **Necklace,** £12.50, Allusions at BHS. **Shoes,** £125, Carvela by Kurt Geiger at Very

The glam maxi dress



LINDSEY VERRIER, 48, from London, is a nurse.

GET THE LOOK

- Live life to the maxi this summer in a super-feminine long dress! You could wear this gorgeous one to a garden party with glitzy sandals for a look that's glam but not formal.
- As it's so versatile, team it with a pair of heels and a sleek updo and you're ready to go to a fancy dinner or summer wedding.

FINISHING TOUCHES

The key to making curls hold in straight hair like Lindsey's is a great curling cream such as **L'Oréal Professionnel Hollywood Waves Tecni.Art Fatales** (£14.99, from mid-June).



Silver heels (£25, Shoe Box at Very) look amazing paired with a long dress for a special event.



Recreate Lindsey's glam waves with **BaByliss Boutique Salon Soft Waves** (£40). Its long barrel is perfect for longer hair styles.



Lindsey wears:

Dress, £50, F&F at Tesco. **Bracelet**, £7.50, Wallis. **Sandals**, £20, Simply Be



The 'wow' floral



MANDY SQUANCE, 45, from London, is a housing officer.

GET THE LOOK

- This summer, floral prints are abstract rather than pretty and delicate – and look all the more sophisticated because of it.
- Wear with 1970s-style block heels – the only shoe to be seen in right now. Best of all, they're comfy, too!

FINISHING TOUCHES



This **orange leather clutch** (£71.20, Lacambra) matches Mandy's outfit perfectly. It's also available in an array of other colours.

Mandy's gorgeous graduated bob was kept in place with **John Frieda Luxurious Volume Thickening Mousse** (£5.99, Boots), applied before blow-drying.



Top off your look with coral lipply. We love **Rimmel Oh My Gloss! Lip Gloss in Go Gloss or Go Home** (£5.49).



Mandy wears:
Dress, £49, M&Co.
Bracelet, £6.50, Wallis.
Shoes, £35, Simply Be



The classic A-line



FIONA CATER, 51, from Richmond, Surrey, is a lifestyle consultant.

GET THE LOOK

- Chic A-line dresses are flattering, no matter what your shape or size. The nipped-in waist and the wide-at-the-hem shape creates a super feminine silhouette.
- This navy dress is a classic – just like an LBD! It'll never go out of fashion and can be worn day or night. Simply team with sandals or statement heels.

FINISHING TOUCHES



For a simple yet chic look for your eyes, smudge **Kiko Cream Crush Lasting Colour Eyeshadow in Pearly Silver Rose** (£6.90) on to lids, with black kohl liner to define. So easy!

We went for a classic pink on Fiona's lips.

Delilah Colour Intense Cream Lipstick in Grace (£24) stays put all day and has a beautiful rich colour.



And to finish the look, this **chain strap shoulder bag** (£39, Monsoon) will take Fiona from day to night.



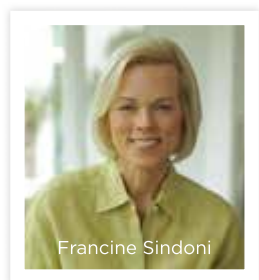
Fiona wears:
Dress, £70, Betty Jackson. **Black** for Designers at Debenhams. **Necklace**, £20, Wallis. **Shoes**, £45, Next

ADVERTISEMENT

MY HAIR HAS NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD

I love my hair

I LOVE VIVISCAL



Francine Sindoni

*Viviscal is recommended by 81% of customers.**

Francine never had issues with her hair and always had thick hair while she was growing up. The first time Francine noticed an issue was two years ago.

"When drying my hair, I would feel the heat on my scalp and I thought how odd... When I saw my hair... in the shower, that is when I knew I had a problem."

Francine heard about Viviscal® through her best

friend, who suggested that she try this product that her dermatologist was taking...

Francine noticed a difference in three to four months with Viviscal. **"I had no negative side effects with Viviscal. Stick with it, my children have noticed that Viviscal has made a difference and also others have commented on how healthy my hair looks."**

THE VIVISCAL HAIR CARE PROGRAMME

STEP 1.

Nourish from Within
Viviscal Supplements contain AminoMar C®, a proprietary marine protein complex. Combined with Biotin and Zinc, these essential ingredients help to maintain healthy hair from within. Viviscal is grounded in over 25 years of continuous research and development. The efficacy of Viviscal is supported by 9 clinical trials which demonstrated statistically significant results.

STEP 2.

Cleanse and Prepare
Viviscal Gentle Shampoo has been scientifically formulated to cleanse and gently exfoliate the scalp to remove dead skin cells. Viviscal Moisturising Conditioner contains Argan oil to soften, nourish and condition the scalp and hair.

STEP 3.

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Award-winning Viviscal Hair and Scalp Serum supports healthy hair growth to help hair appear fuller and thicker.

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1. **The only hair supplement to have 9 clinical trials with over 500 women.**
2. **No.1 hair supplement in the USA*.**
3. **Loved by high profile celebrities including Gwyneth Paltrow, Reese Witherspoon and Katherine Jenkins.**
4. **Recommended by dermatologists, trichologists, and hair transplant surgeons.**
5. **Multi-award winning - voted 'Best Hair Supplement' in the UK by Harper's Bazaar magazine.**

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Contains: 1 month supply of Viviscal Maximum Strength Supplements and Viviscal Hair and Scalp Serum, **PLUS** trial size Gentle Shampoo and Moisturising Conditioner

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Head-to-toe treats
from our beauty editor
SABINE WIESEL



Summer hair saviours

It's not just your face and body that need protection from the sun. The UV rays can also dehydrate your hair and fade its colour. So whether you're spending a couple of days or two weeks in the sun, don't leave home without one of these protection sprays...



BEST FOR A WEEKEND

Charles Worthington Takeaway Sunshine Protector Leave In Spray (£1.99 for 50ml).



BEST FOR LONGER THAN A WEEK

Kérastase Soleil Micro-Voile Protecteur (£20.50 for 125ml).

BEST FOR A WEEK Bed Head Tigi Beach Bound (£14.95 for 100ml).



Try it, use it, love it!

30% OFF NIVEA SKIN AND SUN CARE

I am so excited about this month's offer. When I was growing up, there was always a little blue pot of the original Nivea Creme in my house and there still is today – it's my top skin care staple! With my 30% off, I'll be getting some Protect & Bronze Tan Activating Oil (£15.99) for my holiday as it's one of my fave new sun care picks. I'll also grab the new Protect & Bronze Tan Prolonging After Sun Lotion (£6.49) to make sure my tan lasts a bit longer. Plus, Nivea is offering free delivery when you spend more than £12. Enjoy!

To claim your discount, enter **PRIMA** at the nivea.co.uk checkout from 1 June to 16 July.*



BEAUTY SOS

Q I'm about to have some minor surgery and I may be left with a small scar. I've heard about various creams that can help with scarring, but can you recommend one that works? They're not cheap and I don't want to waste my money.

Olivia Richardson, Norwich

A HealGel Intensive (£37.50) would be perfect for you. Leading plastic surgeons in the US developed it to help heal patients with scarring and it's becoming something of a cult product. The rescue gel is brilliant at soothing, protecting and restoring the skin and it's great for covering up blemishes, too.



sun protection
Calypso



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NEW



**MMMM... DELICIOUS
AND 99 CALORIES**

Your 2-week flat tum summer diet ...with extra benefits



Our diet expert Juliette Kellow has taken the best bits from all the popular plans currently doing the rounds to create a new, knockout super diet that will help you blitz your wobbly tum in just 14 days! Plus, it will leave you with more energy and gorgeous, clearer skin. What are you waiting for? Get started today...





If you want to shape up for summer, you have come to the right place. Our two-week belly-busting plan will help you lose up to 6lb, boost vitality and leave your complexion glowing. What's not to love? In just a fortnight, our diet will make a significant difference to your waistline thanks to delicious foods

that specifically target belly fat! Better still, it doesn't involve starving yourself, so you won't end up feeling hungry or irritable.

A third of British women say they hate their tums, making it the most troublesome body part*



How the plan works

FLATTEN YOUR TUMMY

Studies show that certain foods are especially good at burning belly fat to give you a trimmer waistline. Monounsaturated fats found in olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds, and omega-3 fats in oil-rich fish and low-fat dairy products speed up the rate at which you burn fat from the midriff. And people who eat plenty of wholegrains – such as wholegrain cereal and bread, oats, brown rice and wholemeal pasta – have slimmer waists than those who don't eat as many. Our diet is packed with these foods.

BOOST YOUR ENERGY

Faddy diets and those that are very low in calories can leave you lacking in energy, so this plan provides around

1,300 calories a day. You'll be eating five times a day to prevent dips in blood sugar that can leave you feeling tired, irritable, hungry and in need of a boost. To ensure blood sugar levels stay even, our plan is packed with high-fibre and low GI foods, which release energy slowly and steadily. It's also filled with foods rich in vitamins and minerals that are proven to reduce tiredness and fatigue, including lean red meat, eggs, green leafy veg, beans, nuts and seeds.

GET HEALTHY SKIN

Foods rich in antioxidants, such as selenium and vitamins A, C and E, are your skin's best allies because they help to mop up harmful free radicals, which damage cells. So our diet is full of vitamin-rich foods, and low in added sugar, the enemy for your skin because it causes inflammation, leading to sagginess, lines and wrinkles.

HERE'S WHAT TO DO

- Follow the 14-day plan and for any meals that you don't like, simply swap in an option from one of the other days.
- If you follow a vegetarian diet, we have included plenty of meat- and fish-free options in the plan – just look for the 🌱 symbol.
- As well as three meals each day, choose two snacks from the choices on page 76. To prevent energy dips, it's best to have one in the middle of the morning and one in the middle of the afternoon, but you could save one for the evening, if you prefer.
- In addition to your meals and snacks, have 300ml (½pt) skimmed milk each day to provide you with a range of nutrients, including bone-strengthening calcium.
- Fill up on veg – you can eat most (except potatoes) in unlimited amounts. Start meals with a salad or make a soup from veg and reduced-salt stock.
- Drink plenty of fluids – being dehydrated will make you tired and leave your skin looking dry and dull. Health experts recommend drinking about 1.2 litres (2pt) of fluid a day (food provides around 20% extra on top of this). Water is the best choice.



DAY 1

BREAKFAST: 6tbsp bran flakes with 6 strawberries, 1 kiwi fruit and skimmed milk. ✓

LUNCH: 2 slices wholegrain bread filled with 2tbsp low-fat soft cheese, ½ small can pink salmon and sliced cucumber. Plus 1 slice cantaloupe melon.

DINNER: 1 roasted skinless chicken breast served with salad and sweet potato wedges made from 1 medium-sized sweet potato cut into wedges, brushed with 1tsp olive oil and baked until soft inside and crispy outside. Plus 1 peach.

Sweet potato wedges are packed with skin-friendly vitamin A, and they're tasty, too!

DAY 2

BREAKFAST: 1 slice wholegrain toast with 1tsp low-fat spread, 1 scrambled egg and 1 grilled tomato. Plus 1 apple. ✓

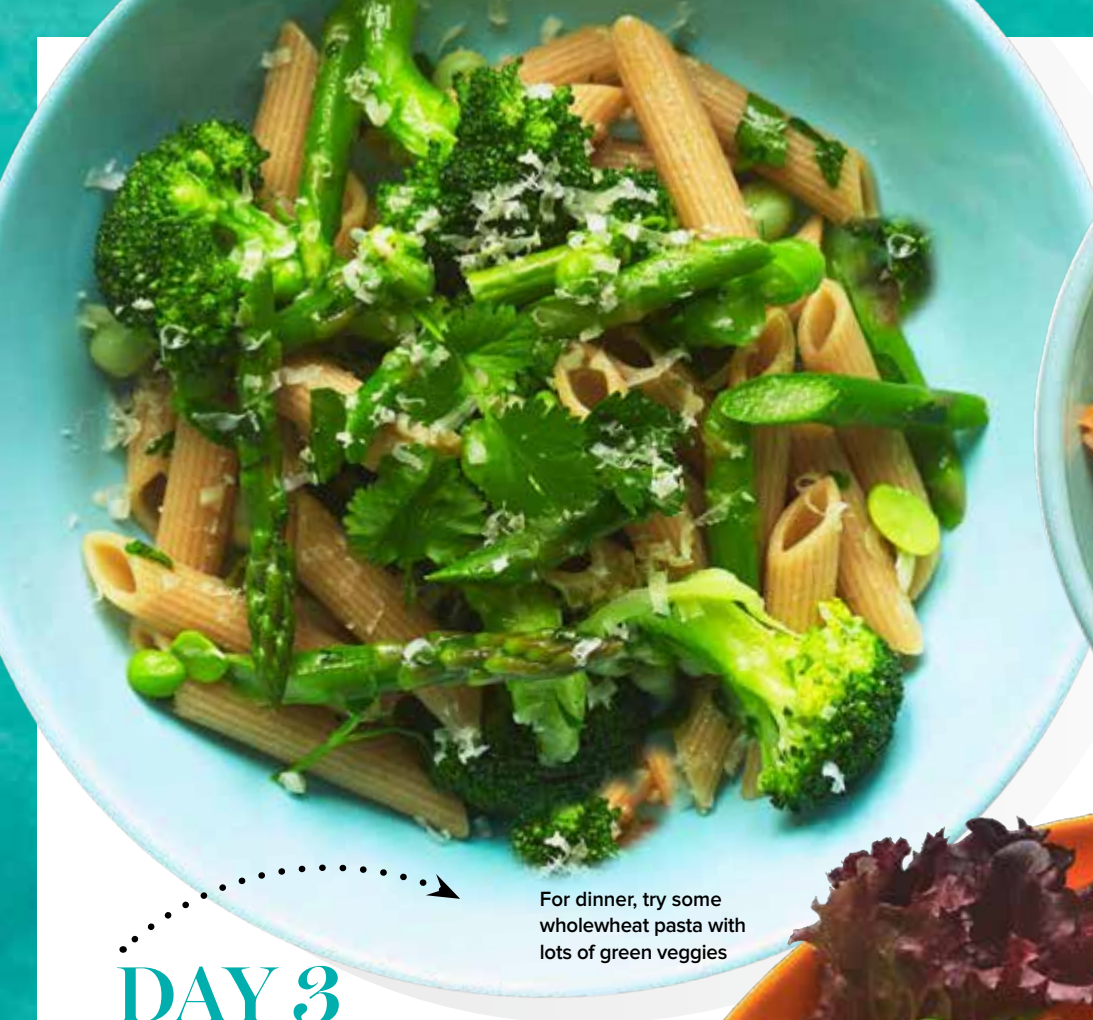
LUNCH: Salad made from 4tbsp cooked couscous, ½ small avocado, 1 tomato and 50g (2oz) reduced-fat feta, diced and tossed with 1tsp olive oil, balsamic vinegar and fresh basil. ✓

DINNER: 1 grilled or griddled fresh tuna steak with a salad made from rocket, baby spinach and 1 tomato, with 1 large jacket potato topped with 1tbsp tzatziki. ➔

For dinner, enjoy a tuna steak and jacket potato

Start the day with protein-rich eggs and give your health a boost

Couscous is a great lunch idea as it's filling and can be mixed with various ingredients



At lunch, enjoy a brown rice salad served with houmous

For dinner, try some wholewheat pasta with lots of green veggies

DAY 3

BREAKFAST: 1 handful of grapes and 1 kiwi fruit, topped with 1 small pot fat-free Greek yoghurt and 2tbsp toasted oats. ✓

LUNCH: ½ carton fresh bean soup with 1 wholegrain roll filled with 2tbsp grated reduced-fat cheese and 1 tomato. ✓

DINNER: Steam a handful of broccoli florets, 3tbsp broad beans and 4 sliced asparagus spears and mix 2tsp olive oil with garlic and fresh herbs. Toss the veg and oil through 200g (7oz) cooked wholewheat pasta, season and serve with 1tbsp grated reduced-fat cheese. ✓

DAY 4

BREAKFAST: Porridge made from 4tbsp oats and 275ml (9½fl oz) skimmed milk with 1 handful of blueberries. ✓

LUNCH: 1 large jacket potato and 100g (3½oz) cooked prawns mixed with 3tbsp tzatziki. Serve with salad.

DINNER: 1 grilled or griddled small lean rump steak with 1 corn on the cob.



A jacket potato topped with prawns makes a tasty lunch

Food fact
Greek dip tzatziki, made from yoghurt and cucumber, is delicious – and it's low-cal, too!

DAY 5

BREAKFAST: 2 slices of wholegrain toast topped with 1 mashed banana. ✓

LUNCH: Salad made from 5tbsp cooked brown rice, 1 grated carrot, 5 cherry tomatoes, 1 roasted red pepper (from a jar, drained), 1tbsp toasted pine nuts and 1tbsp reduced-fat houmous. ✓

DINNER: Make a fajita filling from 1tsp olive oil, 100g (3½oz) turkey breast, 1 small red onion, 1 green pepper and fajita seasoning. Serve with 1 wholemeal wrap, 1 tomato diced with 1 spring onion, fresh coriander and chilli, 1tbsp grated reduced-fat cheese, shredded lettuce and 1tbsp fat-free Greek yoghurt.

Stir-fry tofu for a quick and easy dinner

DAY 6

BREAKFAST: Homemade muesli made from 2tbsp porridge oats, 2 chopped dried apricots, 1 handful of raspberries and 1tbsp mixed sunflower and pumpkin seeds with skimmed milk. ✓

LUNCH: 4 wholegrain crackers topped with 4tbsp low-fat cottage cheese with chives and 1 tomato. Plus 1 peach and 1 handful of grapes. ✓

DINNER: Stir-fry made from 2tsp sunflower oil, fresh chilli, garlic and ginger to taste, 100g (3½oz) tofu, ½ pack ready-prepared stir-fry veg and 2tsp toasted sesame seeds. Serve with 5tbsp cooked brown rice. ✓

DAY 7

BREAKFAST: 1 slice wholegrain toast with 1tsp low-fat spread and 1 boiled egg. Plus 1 nectarine. ✓

LUNCH: 1 large jacket potato with 1 small pot reduced-sugar and salt baked beans and mixed leaves. ✓

DINNER: Toss 12 peeled large prawns with 1tsp olive oil, lemon zest and crushed garlic to taste and leave for 10 mins. Thread on to skewers, then grill until cooked through and serve with 1 wholemeal pitta, salad and 2tbsp reduced-fat houmous. Plus 1 satsuma. ➔

Try this
For a balmy evening treat, pop these prawn skewers on the barbecue and turn until cooked.

Prawns are rich in protein, low in calories and ideal for dinner!

DAY 8

BREAKFAST: 2 Shredded Wheat with 2 handfuls of raspberries, 1 slice cantaloupe melon and skimmed milk. ✓

LUNCH: 1 wholegrain bagel spread with 1tsp horseradish sauce and filled with 2 slices lean roast beef and 1 tomato. Plus 25 cherries.

DINNER: Roast ½ courgette, ½ green pepper, 3 slices aubergine and 1 small red onion in 1tsp olive oil. Mix with ½ large can chickpeas in water (drained), 50g (2oz) reduced-fat feta, 4tbsp cooked couscous, lemon zest and juice and fresh coriander. ✓

Food fact
Green veggies are rich in antioxidants to boost your immune system and loaded with fibre to fill you up.

For dinner, cook spaghetti with green veg and herby low-fat cheese



Enjoy roasted Mediterranean veg for dinner

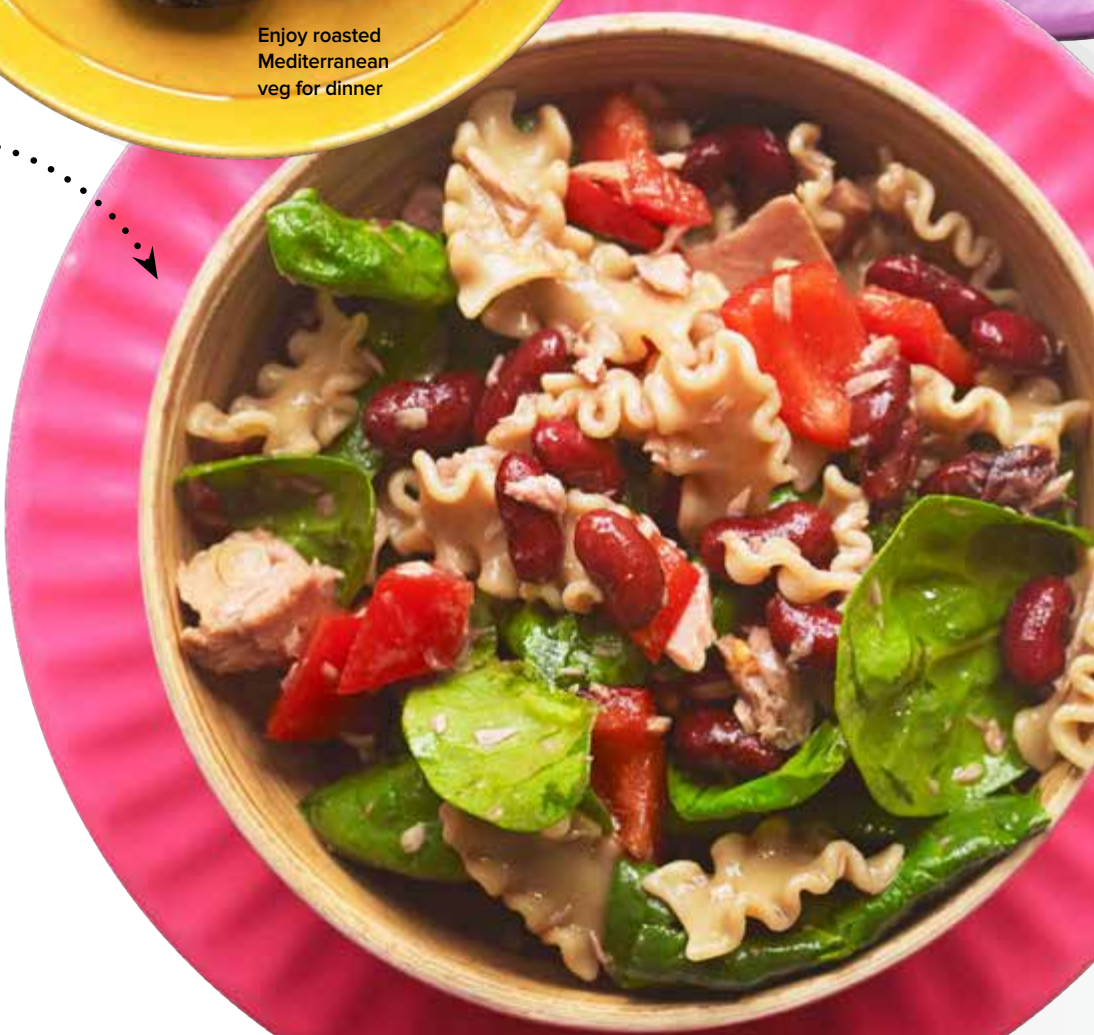
Wholemeal pasta at lunch will keep you full until dinnertime!

DAY 9

BREAKFAST: 1 granary roll filled with 2tsp light mayo, 1 lean rasher grilled back bacon, 1 sliced tomato and chopped lettuce.

LUNCH: Salad made from 5tbsp cooked wholewheat pasta, ½ can tuna in water (drained), 2tbsp tinned red kidney beans, baby spinach, 1 tomato and ½ red pepper, tossed with 1tsp olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

DINNER: Top 1 wholemeal wrap with 4tbsp low-fat tomato sauce then add ½ small red onion, a handful of mushrooms, ½ green pepper and 5 cherry tomatoes, all sliced. Top with black pepper, mixed herbs and ½ small ball sliced reduced-fat mozzarella. Bake in a preheated oven until cooked through. Serve with salad. ✓



DAY 12

BREAKFAST: 1 sliced banana topped with 1 small pot fat-free Greek yoghurt and 2 chopped Brazil nuts. ✓

LUNCH: Sandwich made from 2 slices wholegrain bread filled with 1 egg mashed with 2tsp light mayo and 1 tomato. Plus 25 cherries. ✓

DINNER: Chilli con carne made with 100g (3½oz) extra-lean minced beef, garlic, chilli, 1 small onion, ½ red and ½ green pepper, ½ can red kidney beans in water (drained), reduced-salt beef stock, ½ can tomatoes, 1tbsp tomato purée and black pepper. Serve in a large iceberg lettuce leaf topped with 1tbsp each of grated reduced-fat Cheddar and low-fat soured cream. ➔

DAY 11

BREAKFAST: 2 slices wholegrain toast with 1tbsp peanut butter (with no added sugar). ✓

LUNCH: 1 wholemeal wrap filled with Greek salad made from cucumber, ½ green pepper, 1 tomato, 50g (2oz) reduced-fat feta and 5 black olives, all chopped and mixed together. Plus 1 nectarine. ✓

DINNER: 1 steamed, poached or baked salmon steak served with 4 new potatoes boiled in their skins, steamed asparagus and carrots.

If you're after a Mexican-inspired feast, look no further than this chilli dish!

DAY 10

BREAKFAST: 1 toasted wholegrain bagel filled with 1tbsp low-fat soft cheese and 1 sliced tomato. ✓

LUNCH: Salad made from rocket, 4 chopped sun-dried tomatoes, 1 grilled skinless chicken breast and ½ small avocado. Plus 1 peach.

DINNER: Mix 200g (7oz) cooked wholemeal spaghetti with steamed broccoli, 3tbsp peas and 3tbsp low-fat soft cheese with herbs. Heat through and serve with salad. Plus 1 handful of blueberries. ✓

Try this

For no-carb fajitas and sandwiches, use lettuce leaves to wrap up ingredients instead.

Take this Greek salad wrap to work for lunch

DAY 13

BREAKFAST: 1 slice wholegrain toast with 1tsp low-fat spread, topped with 1 scrambled egg mixed with 1 chopped tomato. Plus 1 peach. 🍏

LUNCH: Sardine bruschetta made from 4 thin slices granary baguette, rubbed with garlic and topped with 1 small can sardines in olive oil (drained) and 2 tomatoes, diced and mixed with fresh chopped parsley, lemon zest and 1tsp of the oil from the sardines. Plus 6 strawberries.

DINNER: Serve 1 roasted lamb chop with potato salad made from 4 new potatoes boiled in their skins, cut into bite-sized pieces and mixed with 1tbsp low-fat soured cream, 3 sliced spring onions and chives. Serve with steamed green beans and cauliflower.

For lunch with a difference, try sardine bruschetta

Food fact

Sardines are full of brain-boosting omega-3, which is also good for your heart.

DAY 14

BREAKFAST: 1 handful each of blueberries and raspberries and 1 slice cantaloupe melon topped with 1 small pot fat-free Greek yoghurt and 1tbsp flaked almonds. 🍏

LUNCH: Salad made from 1 hard boiled egg, ½ small can pink salmon, 2 small new potatoes boiled in their skins, steamed green beans, 1 tomato, lettuce and 3 anchovy fillets, tossed gently and drizzled with balsamic vinegar.

DINNER: Roast a handful of chopped butternut squash, ½ courgette, ½ red pepper, 5 cherry tomatoes and 1 small red onion in 2tsp olive oil. When cooked, top with ½ small ball reduced-fat mozzarella. Leave to melt and serve topped with fresh herbs and a 5cm piece granary baguette. Plus 1 kiwi fruit. 🍏

(Above) Start the day with fresh fruit and (below) round it off with roasted veg.

SNACKS

Choose TWO from this list each day – ideally one mid-morning and one mid-afternoon. Or you can save one snack for the evening, if you like.

- Handful of raspberries with 1 small pot fat-free Greek yoghurt
- 1tbsp unsalted pumpkin or sunflower seeds
- 1tbsp unsalted cashews or hazelnuts; 15 unsalted almonds; 4 Brazil nuts or 4 walnut halves
- 1 apple and 1 peach
- 1 nectarine and a handful of grapes
- Salad topped with 1 hard-boiled egg and balsamic vinegar
- 2 wholegrain crackers with 2tbsp low-fat soft cheese and cucumber
- 1 slice wholegrain toast topped with 1 tomato and fresh basil
- Fruit salad made from 1 slice cantaloupe melon, a handful of blueberries and 1 peach
- 1 small pot fat-free Greek yoghurt with 2 handfuls of puréed strawberries, frozen into a lolly
- Mixed salad with ½ small avocado
- 3tbsp reduced-fat houmous with 3 celery sticks
- 1 mini wholemeal pitta with salad and 1tbsp tzatziki
- 1 slice wholegrain toast topped with 1tbsp tzatziki and cucumber.
- 1 thin slice fruit loaf
- 300ml orange juice frozen as a lolly
- 1 small (125ml/4½fl oz) glass of red or dry white wine
- 2 single (25ml/1fl oz) measures of spirits (eg gin or vodka) with a calorie free mixer



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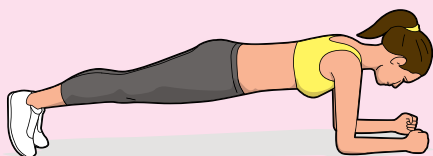
Your fitness

Tone your body *FAST*

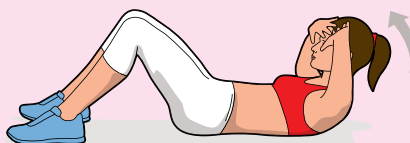
We all have body problem areas – whether it's your tum, thighs, arms or bum. Blitz those wobbly bits with our exclusive exercises from Nuffield Health's Tan Quddus – no gym or equipment required!



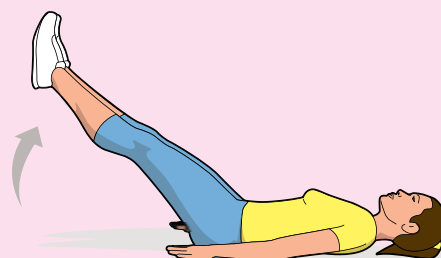
CORE POWER 3 great moves for a toned tum



1 PLANK Lie on your front, bend your elbows and rest your weight on your forearms, then lift your body up on to your toes. Keep your back straight and your nose over your thumbs, with hips square to the floor. For an easier option, drop to your knees. Try to hold the position for a minute at first, and then increase the time.



2 ABDOMINAL CRUNCH Lie on your back, feet flat on the floor and fingertips by your temples. Keep abs pulled in so your back doesn't lift off the floor. Keeping your feet and lower back on the floor, lift your shoulder blades up 3cm, with good control and your core engaged. Keeping your elbows back, pause at the top, then lower your shoulders.

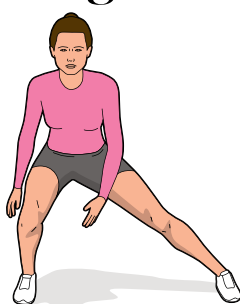


3 LYING LEG RAISE Lie on your back with your legs fully extended and arms by your sides, palms down. Keeping your abs tensed, pull your stomach muscles in so your lower back stays on the floor. Slowly lift both feet until they're above your hips, keeping legs straight. Slowly lower them back down. For an easier option, bend your knees.

SLIM THOSE THIGHS 3 great moves for firmer legs



1 SQUAT For the ultimate leg exercise, stand with feet shoulder-width apart and lower your body by dropping your hips back and down. Keep knees aligned with toes and heels firmly on the ground. Go down to where your knees bend in line with, or just above, your bottom. Push back up and you've done a squat!



2 LATERAL LUNGE Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, abs braced and hands by your side. Step out to the left, shifting your bodyweight over to your left leg, squatting to a 90-degree angle. Lower your bum back and down, keeping your chest and head up. Push off your left leg and go back to the start position. Repeat on right.

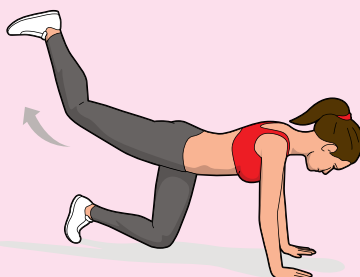


3 BODYWEIGHT LUNGE Start with feet hip-width apart, hands on hips, shoulders back, bracing your abs. Step forward with one leg, lowering your hips so your knees are at 90-degree angles. Keep front knee in line with front toe, with back knee 1 inch off the floor. Keep weight in your heels as you push back to the start.

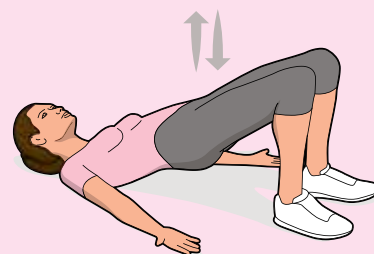
WORK THAT BUM 3 great moves for a pert bottom



1 WIDE SQUAT Stand with feet about shoulder-width apart. Keeping your back straight, heels on the ground and knees in line with toes, lower yourself so your bum is just above your knees. For extra results, lower yourself so your bum is in line with your knees and hold for a few seconds.

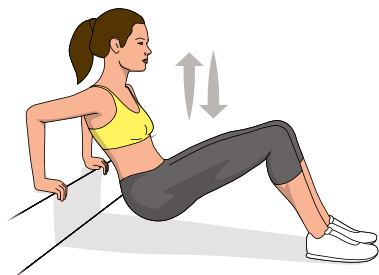


2 GLUTE KICKBACK This will help your hamstrings and buttocks all at once. Get on your hands and knees, with your back parallel to the floor. In a controlled motion, raise your leg and squeeze those buttocks tight! Repeat on other leg and feel your bottom being shaped and strengthened.

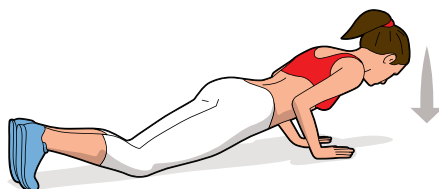


3 GLUTE BRIDGE Lie on your back, with feet hip-width apart, flat on the floor. Brace abs tight so that your lower back is in contact with the floor. Take a breath, breathe out and lift hips to create a straight line from your knees to hips to shoulders. Pause at the top and breathe in as you return to the floor.

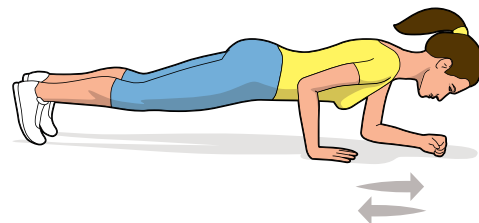
BYE-BYE BINGO WINGS 3 great moves for toned arms



1 TRICEP DIP Use a step or chair, that can take your bodyweight, to push against. Lift yourself up with hands shoulder-width apart, fingers forward, elbows slightly bent and pointing backwards. Place feet out in front of you with a soft knee bend and slowly lower your body until shoulder joints are below elbows. Push back up to the start.



2 NARROW-GRIP PRESS-UP Lie face down with your hands directly under your shoulders. With elbows bent, lift your body off the floor. Keeping your back flat and elbows tucked in, lower down until your chest almost touches the floor. Push your body back up to the start position; repeat. For an easier option, drop to your knees.



3 WALKING PLANK Lie face down, resting on your forearms, with your knuckles together and nose over thumbs. Lift up on to your toes so your back is flat. Move your right arm back into the push-up position, supporting your weight with your hand. Reverse the movement, bringing your arm back to the start, then repeat with the left.



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*Compared to the leading brand, percentage varies across line-up.

**Based on average consumer loading. *Source: Nielsen data, 12 months ending Oct '14

Sarah's surgery



Dr Sarah Brewer, GP and expert in complementary medicine, answers your questions

Ear infections and swimming

Q I enjoy swimming, but have recently had a blocked ear that developed into an infection. I'm terrified about a recurrence as it was so painful. Any ideas?

A Several products are available in pharmacies to help overcome this problem. BioEars (£4.99 for three pairs) are antimicrobial earplugs designed to protect against 'swimmer's ear', while ClearEars (£5.19 for five pairs) are water-absorbing earplugs that resolve waterlogged ears after swimming or showering. If you prefer to use drops, SwimSeal (£7.99 for 7.5ml) forms a waterproof coating inside the ear canal. It was developed by ear, nose and throat specialists to mimic the action of earwax and prevent water becoming trapped in the ear. Talk to your pharmacist to work out which product suits you best.

Understanding irregular heart rhythms

Q I've just been diagnosed with atrial fibrillation after feeling faint. There's no family history of it and I eat a healthy diet with regular exercise. What is likely to have caused it? I'm only 52!

A While atrial fibrillation (AF) is uncomfortable to live with, it's usually not life-threatening. It's the most common irregular heart rhythm – around one in 200 people aged 50 to 59 are affected, and the number doubles with every 10 years of age after that. There is often no obvious cause, but it can be linked with high blood pressure, diabetes, heart valve disease, thyroid problems and alcohol. People with sleep apnoea also seem to be at higher risk. There's thorough information about AF at afibmatters.org,



which confirms that it's good to continue with moderate exercise, but avoid strenuous activities. It also suggests limiting your caffeine intake to two or three cups of coffee per day.

Links between coughs and asthma

Q I've had an irritating cough for the past six months, which only comes on at night and often wakes me up. My GP said it might be asthma and prescribed an inhaler, but my pharmacist says I should not be using one unless I'm having difficulty breathing. I'm confused – what could be causing it?

A Night-time coughs can have a number of different causes, including asthma (perhaps triggered

by a dust-mite allergy), acid reflux, sinusitis with mucus dripping down the back of your throat, side effects of some drugs (such as ACE inhibitors used to treat high blood pressure) and iron deficiency, which can cause swelling and irritation in the throat. If the reliever inhaler does help, you could well have cough-variant asthma, especially if exercise brings it on. You may also need a different type of inhaler (a preventer) to use regularly (to damp down lung inflammation) rather than just when symptoms occur. Do go back to see your GP. You may benefit from allergy testing and some blood tests to check your ferritin levels (to look for iron deficiency).

Flip-flops for painful feet

Q I'd love to wear flip-flops this summer, but I have pain in the balls of my feet. Do you think they would do more harm than good?

A It depends on the cause of your pain. If it is from inflammation of the metatarsal bones (metatarsalgia), it could become worse when gripping the flip-flop with your toes during walking, as this pushes the ball of your foot into the ground. The only way to know if you can tolerate them is to try. Choose one from a range designed by a podiatrist, which will help to align the feet in the correct position, such as the Floriana sandal (below; £60, vionicshoes.co.uk). Don't walk too far in them – just around the house and garden. You may well find they help rather than make the pain worse.





Inner beauty

Perfectil Plus Skin from Vitabiotics, the UK's number one vitamin company, nourishes from the inside and provides micronutrients to support the building blocks of your skin, hair and nails, to help support their health and appearance. Perfectil Plus Skin combines Britain's number one formula for skin, hair and nails, including vitamin C to help support collagen formation for the normal function of skin plus a special Nutri-dermal capsule for even greater nutritional support. The Nutri-dermal capsule includes extra biotin, which contributes to the maintenance of normal healthy skin. Each original tablet contains 22 nutrients.

Perfectil Plus Skin, RRP £18.20 for 56 tablets/capsules, available from Boots and Superdrug and online at perfectil.com.



Nail worries

Q I've always had lovely nails, but they've recently developed white spots. Is this normal?

A There are a lot of theories about the cause of white spots on the nails. The most popular is that they relate to minor trauma at the base of the nail, such as knocking a finger against a door frame. Others believe they are due to a zinc deficiency, although this is controversial. The theory is that if you are zinc deficient, this may reduce the healing response leading to white spots. If that is a problem, you will also likely have poor hair growth, increased susceptibility to infections and reduced taste sensation. Boost your diet with zinc-rich foods such as red meat, liver, kidney, seafood, wholegrains, nuts, seeds (especially pumpkin seeds), lentils, soy beans and eggs. Sweet potatoes, beansprouts and yoghurt are also useful sources.

Flagging energy levels

Q Since hitting the menopause, I've felt tired all the time. Is there anything that I can do to give myself a boost or is it just my changing hormones?

A If you feel lacking in energy for longer than two weeks, despite



eating a healthy diet and improving your quality of sleep, see your doctor. While only one in 10 people are likely to have a medical cause for their symptoms, certain conditions need to be ruled out such as anaemia, underactive thyroid and autoimmune conditions. If nothing obvious is found, your doctor may discuss the pros and cons of hormone replacement therapy, so you can decide whether or not you want to trial this.

SARAH'S SPOTLIGHT ON: DEPRESSION

Samaritans Awareness Day is on 24 July and it's a good opportunity to talk about depression. While it's normal to feel down occasionally, a full-blown depressive illness can result if you develop an imbalance of brain chemicals needed to pass messages from one brain cell to another. Symptoms include difficulty concentrating, sadness and crying for no apparent reason. You may comfort eat initially, but as depression takes hold, you tend to lose your appetite. Your lifetime risk of a major depressive illness is one in 10 if you're male, and one in four if you're female. However, women tend to be better at talking about their emotions, while men bottle things up. This could be one reason why the suicide rate for men is three and a half times greater than that of women.

So what can help? Several recent studies suggest that people who eat fish regularly are less likely to develop depression than those who rarely do. Clinical trials show that omega-3 fatty acids can improve symptoms of depression, lengthen periods of remission and improve the short-term course of the illness in those affected. Fish oils provide long-chain fatty acids (DHA and EPA) that help brain cells pass on messages more effectively. Regular exercise – 30 to 60 minutes, most days – also helps by releasing mood-lifting brain endorphins. If you feel depressed, it's important to seek help. Talking therapies are usually tried first before resorting to antidepressant medications. Samaritans offer fantastic support – call 0845 790 9090, or visit samaritans.org.

You can follow Dr Sarah on Twitter @DrSarahB, or read her nutritional blog at drsarahbrewer.com



Bring back the good times.

You want to keep enjoying the food and drink you like.

So you should keep brushing twice a day every day with a Sensodyne desensitising toothpaste. And not stop when your sensitivity pain goes away because chances are it will come back. But the good news is, you can help prevent it.



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N°1 DENTIST RECOMMENDED BRAND FOR SENSITIVE TEETH

Are you sitting on a problem?

Then try naturally soothing remedies for those intimate wellbeing dilemmas...

Us girls have a habit of keeping quiet about our intimate problems, settling instead for thinking about something else and simply putting up with them. Goodness knows why, when there are so many natural supplements, remedies and more that can help soothe the angst and calm symptoms. It's good to talk, so let's do it and help each other out!



Cystitis TRY HERBS AND HOMEOPATHY

No need to remind you what cystitis feels like: that urgent need to pee and the sting that goes with it! Natural remedies can be really helpful and homeopath Susan Curtis gives us some great ways to soothe...

HERBS 'One of the most effective ways to treat cystitis is with herbal tea,' says Susan.

● Put 1tsp each of dried buchu, couch grass and marshmallow leaves in a cup. Add boiling water, leave to draw for 10 mins, then strain and drink. 'These herbs are antiseptic to the urinary tract,' says Susan. 'Take four times a day.'



HOMEOPATHY There are several homeopathic remedies with a good record for treating cystitis. Seeing a homeopath will get you a personal remedy. These three from nealsyardremedies.com are the most used.

● **APIS 30C** is good if you have a frequent urge to pee with the last drops burning and stinging.
● **CANTHARIS 30C** for those with a

persistent urge to pee with burning or stabbing pains.

● **NUX VOMICA 30C** is good for those who suffer with cutting, cramping and burning pains – or those who feel irritable.

● Choose the remedy that best suits your symptoms and take one pill three times a day for 2 to 3 days, or until things improve.

Lavender is an essential oil in more ways than one! Just add a few drops to a carrier oil of your choice and add to a bath for quick relief.



• Remember: if cystitis is very severe (back pain or blood in your urine), you'll need to see your doctor.

Yeast infections

OPT FOR DIET SWAPS AND SMART SUPPLEMENTS

Whatever you call it – yeast infection, candida or thrush – too many of us suffer from this problem. Caused by an imbalance of good and bad bacteria, it can be triggered by stress. Women's health expert Dr Marilyn Glenville (marilynglenville.com) suggests some effective moves...

REFRAME YOUR DIET 'As well as eating healthily, you can help to eliminate thrush by focusing on a few changes,' says Marilyn.

AVOID...

● **Sugar** and foods containing sugar, such as cakes, sweets and other refined foods, as they promote the growth of yeast. It's best to avoid fruit juices too, as they're high in sugar and low in fibre.

● **Yeast** Drop foods containing yeast as well as anything that's fermented, such as bread and wine.

TRY ADDING...

● **Live yoghurt** containing beneficial bacteria. 'When researchers gave women one lactobacillus acidophilus-containing yoghurt a day over six months, there was a threefold decrease in bouts of thrush,' says Marilyn.



POP A SUPPLEMENT Along with a general multivitamin, Marilyn suggests some other supplements that are scientifically known to help with thrush and boost immunity...

● **BETA-CAROTENE** Levels of which have been found to be low in the vaginal cells of women who have thrush. Take 15mg (25,000iu) daily.

● **ZINC** Deficiency has been connected with women who have recurrent thrush. Good levels are critical for the optimum functioning of your immune system. Take 30mg daily.

● **PROBIOTICS** To increase the good bacteria in your system and help control the amount of yeast overgrowth. 'You can also use probiotics internally with vaginal pessaries,' says Marilyn. Try IntraFresh, £13.36 for 6, naturalhealthpractice.com.

● **GARLIC** 'Take when you are trying to eliminate an attack of thrush and as prevention if you're prone to attacks,' says Marilyn. Take 1,000mg daily.



Tea tree essential oil: Add a few drops to your bath when you have thrush, as research has shown it to be an excellent antifungal.

Haemorrhoids

GO FOR SUBTLE FIBRE AND SIMPLE SOOTHERS

Unglamorous for sure, but this really is a problem that makes sitting uncomfortable! Once you've been checked by a doc that the pain and soreness are definitely haemorrhoids or an anal fissure – a small tear due to straining when constipated – you have lots of natural options.

TAKE MORE...

PSYLLIUM!

Constipation is often at the heart of the matter and psyllium, a plant with seeds and husks that can magically sweep the gut clean, is the way to go.

Soak 1tsp of psyllium seeds in a mug of warm water overnight, then take in the morning. Or try a gentle psyllium-based gut cleanser that features a probiotic to soothe the gut wall. We like Complete Fibre Cleanse by FoodScience of Vermont, £20 for 168g, victoriahealth.com. Or try dried psyllium seeds, £3 for 50g, nealsyardremedies.com.

Add a few drops of Cypress, Myrrh or Lavender essential oil to a bath. From £9.80, nealsyardremedies.com. It's bliss!

EAT MORE...

BUCKWHEAT! It's gluten free, rich in protein, fibre and rutin, which is a bioflavonoid that helps strengthen the blood vessels. Try it as a warm cereal, an alternative to rice or add to salads.



DRINK MORE...

WATER! Naturally, to help ease constipation. Also, try hot water with 1tsp of equal parts of dried pilewort, yarrow and horse chestnut leaves blended together. Steep for 10 mins, strain and drink – a haemorrhoid-soothing tea.

Intimate dryness

ADD GENTLE MOISTURE

More often than not, this is due to the menopause. If lovemaking is ooh rather than ooh, moisturise!

TAKE... a supplement or two. Nutritionist Shona Wilkinson picks...

● SEA BUCKTHORN OIL

is thought to have an exceptionally high content of omega 7, which aids vaginal dryness by helping to retain moisture. 'Take it for a minimum of 12 weeks to start noticing the effects,' says Shona.

● **VITAMIN E** is known for helping vaginal dryness. 'Wheatgerm, wholegrains, veggie oils and vegetables are good sources,' says Shona. 'But you may want to take a supplement or even apply pure vitamin E oil topically.'

EAT... a diet rich in essential fatty acids and phytoestrogens.

'Add oily fish, including mackerel, sardines, salmon and anchovies,' says Shona. 'Plus fermented soya products, soy beans and flaxseed for their phytoestrogens. Try adding a spoonful of flaxseed to your food every day.'



LOVE... topical gels that help sort things out. Try Arkopharma Phyto Soya Vaginal Gel, £14.95, nutricentre.com. It has an oil-in-water emulsion that has a gentle moisturising action.

Try Pharma Nord Omega 7 Sea Buckthorn Oil, £18.49 for 60 caps; or Solgar Vitamin E Liquid, £10.49 for 59.2ml, both from nutricentre.com.



Bladder weakness

TRY PUMPKIN, PILATES AND DIET POWER!

Whether it's trouble halting the flow (overactive bladder), a constant urge to pee (sensitive bladder) or leaks when you laugh or sneeze (stress incontinence), regaining control is important! Let's try...

PUMPKIN SEED

POWDER Results show it has a real tissue-building effect on those weakening pelvic floor muscles.

● **WHY DOES IT WORK?** Top pharmacist Shabir Daya has the insider know-how. 'Firstly, it works to make testosterone more available – a hormone that's deficient in those with an overactive bladder,' says Shabir. 'And, it helps increase nitric oxide – a lack of which results in bladder hyperactivity.'

● **HOW DO WE TAKE IT?** 'In juice,' says Shabir. 'Start with one scoop twice a day for a month, then one scoop daily.' Find: Organic Pumpkin Seed Protein Powder, £26.60 for 600g, victoriahealth.com.

PELVIC MOVES

'The single most important thing you can do for yourself is to tighten your pelvic floor muscles,' says Marilyn Glenville, author of *The Natural Health Bible for Women*. Forgotten how? First, check you recognise these muscles: next time you go to the loo, squeeze to stop the flow of urine. The muscles you use are the pelvic muscles. Practise the following several times a day:

● Slowly contract your pelvic floor muscles. Hold for a count of two (over time, work up to a count of 10). Release. Repeat 10 times. Then, rest for one minute before moving on to the next step. ● Quickly as you can, tighten and release your pelvic floor muscles about 30 times.



TREAT GUM DISEASE IF YOU HAVE IT.

If you spit blood when you brush your teeth, it could be an early sign of gum disease, a leading cause of tooth loss. Both Corsodyl Mint Mouthwash and Corsodyl Toothpaste are clinically proven to help stop bleeding gums. So if you spit blood in the sink when you brush your teeth, use Corsodyl.

CORSODYL®

FOR PEOPLE WHO SPIT BLOOD WHEN THEY BRUSH THEIR TEETH.



Corsodyl Mint Mouthwash is a medicine containing chlorhexidine digluconate. Always read the label.

GOOD FOOD CHOICES!

You can also help yourself to have better bladder control with a few easy changes to your diet. Nutritionist Shona Wilkinson has some simple diet dos and don'ts. Okay, there are a fair few things to avoid – but, hey, you want more control, don't you?

TOP FIVE THINGS TO AVOID...

- 1 Alcohol** can interfere with signals from the brain to the bladder giving you less control.
- 2 Spicy foods** can irritate the lining of the bladder, leading to leakage.
- 3 Fizzy drinks** contain a cocktail of ingredients, such as caffeine, sugar, and carbon dioxide, which are guaranteed to irritate a sensitive bladder.
- 4 Sugar** and sugary foods can aggravate your bladder. Watch for hidden sugar, such as corn syrup or fructose, and try not to replace it with artificial sweeteners as some research has shown that they also contribute to incontinence.
- 5 Caffeine**, as there's evidence it has a diuretic effect, which increases the amount of urine you make. It is also thought to make the muscles that contract when you urinate overactive, which stops the full emptying of the bladder.



AND THREE TO LOVE MORE...

- 1 Dark green leafy veg** such as kale, cabbage, broccoli and spinach. They have a wonderful amount of nutrients, including magnesium, which is important for muscle and nerve function and may help with incontinence. ● Have: A dark green leaf-based smoothie every day. ● Try: Terranova Life Drink, £25.49 for 227g, nutricentre.com.
- 2 Cucumbers** contain a valuable nutrient called **silica**, thought to support the bladder due to its anti-inflammatory factors. ● Have: Other silica-containing foods, such as almonds, peanuts and flaxseeds. ● Take: Lamberts Silica, £9.39 for 90 capsules, nutricentre.com.
- 3 Uva ursi tea**, made with the uva ursi herb, is thought to help strengthen the membranes of the bladder. It's also thought to have antibacterial properties, which may help with bladder infections. ● Have: 3 cups daily. ● Try: Uva ursi, £2.41 for 25g, nutricentre.com.



PROTECT YOUR GUMS IF YOU DON'T.



The Corsodyl Daily range is specifically designed to help maintain healthy gums as part of your everyday routine. After all, where would your teeth be without your gums?

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DAILY

HELPING MAINTAIN
HEALTHY GUMS
EVERY DAY.



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‘My stepchildren bring me so much joy’

Author Susan Wilkins didn't see children in her life until she met her new partner in her forties – and suddenly everything changed

Family relationships always intrigued me. And I realised this more than ever when I found myself sitting in Pizza Express in Islington, north London, with two wide-eyed, expectant children I hardly knew. I was a fortysomething television scriptwriter and I'd led a pretty rackety life. The kids belonged to my new partner Sue, who was in bed with the flu.

Like many gay couples, Sue and I met through a magazine ad. We chatted on the phone and initially I thought: “Well, she seems really interesting, but how can I go out with someone who has the same name as me? It sounds like a bad sitcom – Sue and Sue or, even worse, Susan and Sue!” And then there were the children.

Jenny was 13, Andy only eight. Sue called them her “little people” and I knew from the outset that they came as a package, along with a fearsome cat called Nesbit.

In my teens, I always wanted, and indeed assumed, that one day I'd have kids of my own. However, that was to prove far more

complicated than I imagined. When I was 25, I had a friend who lost custody of her daughter in an acrimonious divorce battle; the court found her to be an unfit mother simply because she had come out as a lesbian. Fighting such prejudice was a long and arduous process. It meant that for lesbians of my generation, there were few choices. Most of us simply got on with busy lives and careers. I got to 40 and just didn't think that kids were in my life plan.

NEW FAMILY DYNAMICS

Then Sue came along and all that changed. When I first met her children, we were all nervous. I was living in London at the time and it was great fun showing them the sights. They were country kids and had only ever been on the Tube once. We went to the Tower of London, the museums, the parks and several West End shows. They loved it all and their enthusiasm made me appreciate with a fresh eye what was around me.

The pizza outing was my first attempt to go solo with them after Sue and I had been together for around six weeks and, the truth was, I was clueless. I'd provided some form of care to various pets at one time or another – but not children. As we peered at each other nervously over the huge menus, I began to worry – should they have fizzy drinks? But surely all that sugar was bad for them? I saw a minefield of wrong decisions looming before me.

My next blunder also involved sugar. The day Sue and I moved in together two months later, with removal men traipsing through and our new home in chaos, I gave the kids £5 to go to the sweet shop. Only later did I learn what a problem I'd created for them. They'd never been given such a vast fortune to buy sweets before. You could get a shedload of two-a-penny chews, Bazooka Joes and Black Jacks for a fiver. They debated what to do. Should they bring me change? They had no idea what I expected.

Getting our wires crossed and not knowing what to expect became a running theme in our early years and would have been familiar, I'm sure, in any stepfamily. We really weren't that different and I now wonder whether it was my expectation of being judged harshly as a gay parent that made me unduly defensive.

Jenny's first day at her new school was a nightmare, and I felt responsible. Originally, we had all wanted to live in London together, but I had suggested Essex. This was where I grew up and here we could afford a bigger home. But Jenny had been moved from a small and friendly Norfolk school to a big, impersonal Essex comp and she was really miserable. In my new role as “parent”, I didn't know how I was supposed to fix this. I hadn't been near a school for 25 years, so I put on my confidence-boosting leather jacket and went to sort things out. No one was going to make “my girl” miserable. That was my starting point. I don't recall being rude, though I was determined to be assertive. It was only much later that I discovered

Susan (second from left) met her partner Sue through an ad



Susan (second from left) with her partner Sue and stepchildren Jenny and Andy



‘As for Sue’s two “little people”, they continue to bring a huge amount of joy into my life’

I had put the fear of God in the two senior staff members I met.

But it transpired that since my own totally homophobic school days, things had moved on. Faced with what they dubbed our “unconventional family set-up”, they fell over themselves to be politically correct. Jenny’s year group tutor took her under his wing, making sure she wasn’t bullied and, within the year, our house had become the regular hangout for her mates, who regarded it as “beyond cool” to have lesbian parents!

MOVING FORWARD

By the time it came to taking Andy to join the local rugby club five years later, I’d abandoned the leather jacket and most of the “don’t mess with me” attitude. Walking into the testosterone-filled clubhouse, all that really concerned me was the panic that my precious boy might end up breaking his neck on the rugby pitch. The coach treated me like every

other nervous mother, assuring me that all would be fine. And it was.

Fortunately, times have changed. Gay marriage is on the statute book, lesbians have access to donor insemination and celebrities like Mary Portas and Clare Balding grace our screens with few people batting an eyelid about their sexuality.

As for Sue’s two “little people”, they grew up, went to university and out into the world and continue to bring a huge amount of joy and fun into my life. The cat Nesbit, though now quite old, is still with us and no longer fearsome, and I’m living with the person I adore, even though we both have the same name.

As a writer, no experience is wasted; like magpies we’re greedy collectors. For me, understanding the dynamics of family has always been essential to the storytelling process, because in the end we’re all the products of some kind of family.’

• *Susan’s new book *The Mourner* (Pan Macmillan, £7.99) is out now*

THE CHANGING FACE OF THE BRITISH FAMILY

Susan’s family set-up isn’t unique. A recent study revealed that in today’s society, there are more than 35 different types of families living in Britain*. These include single parents, unmarried parents and blended families, with one in 111 families being headed up by gay, bisexual or transgender couples**. But the role of women is also changing. The traditional idea of the family with 2.4 children and the man as the breadwinner is virtually extinct, as many women choose to have kids later in life, often to pursue careers. Over the past 40 years, female employment has been on the rise as the number of women starting a family over the age of 40 has quadrupled***.



HOLIDAY GADGETS

Whether you're planning to go on a camping trip or beach holiday, here's our round-up of the latest must-have holiday gizmos

Pitching your tent

BioLite CampStove

Camping enthusiasts who like their gear to multitask will appreciate this clever stove. Feed it twigs, bark or pine cones and it will toast your marshmallows, boil water and heat your hands – plus, it will charge your phone via a USB dock. The trick is its internal fan, which creates electricity. £140, *Cotswold Outdoor*



Spectrum Duo radio

Keep in touch with world events or find your favourite music station on this portable DAB/FM radio. It takes four C batteries, so is ideal for tent life and, back home, you can plug it into the mains. It works as a Bluetooth speaker too, so everyone can take turns at choosing the campfire vibes. £59.95, *John Lewis*

Vodafone R215 4G Mobile Wi-Fi

If your family views a camping holiday as internet cold turkey, then invest in this mobile wi-fi to keep everyone happy. Up to 10 gadgets can connect to it simultaneously. On pay as you go, it comes loaded with 6GB of data – enough to watch up to 200 YouTube videos. But, just two full-length HD films will use all 6GB. £59, *Vodafone*. Or get the R216 upgrade for £60. A 3GB top-up costs £20



24 LED lantern with remote

This ultra-bright LED lantern will light up your tent and has an impressive 35-hour burn time. Better still, it comes with a remote control, so you can operate it when you're zipped into your sleeping bag. £20, *Cotswold Outdoor*

Hitting the road

Cobra Jumpack Off on a road trip? What could go wrong? If your car battery goes flat, or your phone runs out of power in the middle of nowhere, a Jumpack could save the day. It's powerful enough to jump-start most cars, will charge your phone and even doubles up as a torch. £79.99, Argos



TomTom Go 5000 Europe As smooth as a tablet screen, this satnav is easy to use and will make sure you reach your destination without tears. It comes with Lifetime Traffic – which alerts you to delays – as well as Lifetime Maps, so you're updated on any new road layouts. £259.99, TomTom

Fatframe Designed by mum Alison Nicolson, this child-proof iPad case has easy-to-grip handles and bounces if it's dropped. With an optional attachment, it can be fitted to a car headrest for peaceful hands-free entertainment. From £18.99; attachment, £12.99, both Fatframe



KaZoo Penguin MyPhones These cute headphones from Griffin – also available in a frog design – are specially created for small ears, with sound-limiting technology. Good for your little ones' hearing – and your sanity. Peppa Pig's tones will be strictly back seat only. £19.99, Amazon

In exotic climes

Elgato smart key Put this key fob in your suitcase and it will text your phone as it arrives on the carousel. So you can sit and relax instead of watching everyone's luggage go around. It syncs with an iPhone via an app and can be set to alert you if you stray too far from a bag, or leave it behind. £29.02, Amazon



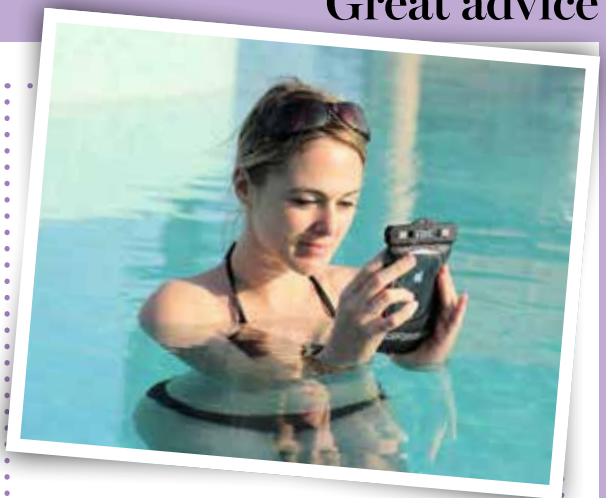
Braven Lux portable wireless speaker This chic gold speaker is no bigger than a clutch bag and will fit in the palm of your hand. Stream music from your phone or use it as a speakerphone to make calls. It's water resistant and with 12 hours of wireless playtime, it should be able to out-party you. £89.99, Amazon



Nikon Coolpix AW130 This is the Bear Grylls of cameras: it's shockproof to 2m, dustproof, cold resistant to -10°C and waterproof to 30m. It even comes in a camouflage design! Use wi-fi to instantly transfer photos to your phone to upload on social media. It also shoots HD video. £279, Currys



Airpods These Bluetooth headphones fold flat into a neoprene carry bag and are wireless, making them ideal for travel. The comfy ear cushions block outside noise – handy if you're sitting next to a snorer on a plane! And an audio cable is included so you can watch the in-flight film. £59.99, BoomPods



Chilling on the beach



OverBoard waterproof phone case OverBoard cases are waterproof to 6m – so it won't matter if you knock your phone into the pool! You can make and receive calls, and even film underwater, too. From £18.75, OverBoard

Salter digital travel scales

Familiar with that moment at the check-in desk, when the digital scale reading creeps up? Instead of being charged for excess baggage, weigh-in when you pack. These nifty scales are easy to use – just put the strap through the case handle and lift to get the reading. £16.99, Salter



Kindle Paperwhite Don't waste suitcase space on hefty paperbacks! Thinner than a pencil, this e-reader stores 1,100 books, has a glare-free screen so you can read in sunlight and there's a light for when the sun goes down. Plus, the battery lasts eight weeks. £109, Amazon



MiPow Power Cube 5200L

If you don't take a holiday from your smartphone, you may need back-up power to cover those long days by the pool, posting 'braggies' (snaps to make the people at home envious). This power pack will charge two phones at once and can fully charge a tablet. £49.99, MiPow



‘We brought the beach inside!’



Kirsty Elson and Steve Clark’s creativity and love of beachcombing has helped them transform a dated cottage into a seaside home that’s full of character



KITCHEN (BELOW) Kirsty and Steve designed a new, user-friendly layout for their kitchen, adding the storage and workspace they needed. The simple, off-white cabinets and solid oak worktops reflect the style of the house and create a relaxed cottage atmosphere.



Look around Kirsty Elson and Steve Clark’s home in Liskeard, Cornwall, and you’ll see evidence of many hours spent beachcombing on the local shoreline. ‘We’re scavengers!’ laughs Kirsty, an artist. ‘We love finding things on the beach no one else would look at and turning them into something useful.’

The couple live in a 200-year-old, three-bedroom house with their young sons, Buddy and Herbie. It’s furnished with simple, solid and functional pieces, made by Steve (who’s a charity operations director), using oddments of wood gathered at low tide. Kirsty makes smaller, decorative wooden pictures and sculptures. Along with painted pieces and unusual second-hand finds, their skills bring a quirky flavour to the family home.

‘Our look is quite minimal with a real coastal influence,’ says Kirsty. ‘We love the soft, bleached wood complemented with white and some colourful accents.’

Kirsty and Steve were living in Kent when Steve’s work brought them to the West Country. ‘I was expecting Buddy by then, and I was really keen to move back to the South West to be near my family in Devon,’ says Kirsty.

The couple spent months searching for an older-style property and soon discovered that most of the houses within their budget were quite small. ‘This house was a bit beyond our price range, but we came to see it anyway, because the outside looked lovely,’ says Kirsty. ‘Inside, the living room had dark green walls and a red carpet, the kitchen and bathroom were very basic and worn and the main bedroom was a yellow colour. Even so, I loved its character, the light and the big, beautiful sash windows that gave the house its Grade II listing. I had a gut feeling we would end up living here.’

Fortunately, the couple’s offer was accepted and, once in, they set to work on the more straightforward ➔



Gorgeous real home

LIVING ROOM

Steve made the rustic coffee table himself from salvaged wood about 14 years ago. More recently, he also made the mirror frame and corner table. The tin chest, found in a junk shop and repainted, makes a handy storage box.



DINING ROOM

(LEFT) This spacious room doubles as a comfy spot for quiet reading, thanks to an inviting leather sofa that was given to the couple. At £25, the table and chairs were a brilliant buy on eBay, while the mirror frame is another of Steve's creations. Bold flashes of red inject a breezy, seaside feel.

KITCHEN ALCOVE

(FAR LEFT) Steve fitted shelves and a handy pull-down storage area and, using some blackboard paint, Kirsty turned the flap into a message board. The pretty gingham curtain masks more storage and matches the pastel crockery.





‘I loved the house’s character, the light and the big sash windows. I had a gut feeling we would end up living here’

MAIN BEDROOM (ABOVE AND RIGHT) The large window is a focal feature of the couple’s bedroom. The bedside table was made by Steve and echoes the exposed structural oak beams that add character to the simple, white walls.

CRAFT ROOM (BELOW) Kirsty’s sewing room is furnished with second-hand, painted items and sets the tone for her driftwood designs. She also creates her own cards and works with textiles, making small toys and decorations, to sell online.

tasks, like repainting walls, while they planned and saved for some more ambitious changes. ‘I could see that most of the things we didn’t like, such as the dark walls, were superficial and could be changed easily,’ says Kirsty. ‘I knew that if everything was painted in light colours, the house would seem a lot bigger and feel quite different.’

Kirsty and Steve had the house rewired as the first major job, after which they tackled the rest of the rooms one by one. The living room and dining room were easily transformed by painting the walls white and, in time, the red carpets were replaced with new, cream floor coverings.

Renovating the kitchen, with its old cooker, tatty cupboards and limited workspace was the biggest project. ‘We lived with the existing kitchen for about two years, but it really was inadequate,’ says Kirsty. ‘We took all the measurements and redesigned the layout ourselves. Steve thought about fitting the new units, too, but in the end a local builder carried out the renovation for us and did a great job.’

With its simple, cream cabinets and wooden worktops, the new kitchen has made a huge difference to the house, but its cottage charm has been retained in the hefty exposed beam and rough whitewashed stonework around a tiny, original fireplace. Above the fireplace, Kirsty’s pans hang on a chunky rack made by Steve from a piece of discarded timber.

Meanwhile, the home bursts with coffee tables, mirrors, picture frames, storage boxes



and shelves that Kirsty and Steve have recycled from driftwood. ‘Our friends laugh at us, but we’ve found some really unusual things,’ says Kirsty. ‘I love the ladder in our living room, which is a beach find, and we have a section of a boat that we’re going to turn into a garden seat.’

Kirsty also likes to browse in second-hand shops and has an eye for unusual accessories, like the old bowling ball and traditional sewing machine displayed in the living room. The pair have built a cheery beach hut-inspired wardrobe for Buddy and Herbie’s bedroom and have sewn numerous blinds and cushions, too.

‘Finding something unique that’s free or costs almost nothing is always a real buzz,’ says Kirsty. ‘And, now the boys are getting older, we all go down to the beach together and they love finding stuff – they’ve caught the beachcombing bug, too!’





LANDING (ABOVE) Steve made this storage cabinet by combining various panels and mixing bare and painted wood together. Its three compartments fasten with a simple turn mechanism.



BOYS' BEDROOM (RIGHT) 'The boys' furniture is mostly second-hand things we've painted, so a bit of wear and tear doesn't really matter,' says Kirsty. Simple touches, like the bunting and striped blind, give the room a fun, nautical feel.

Get Kirsty's contemporary coastal look

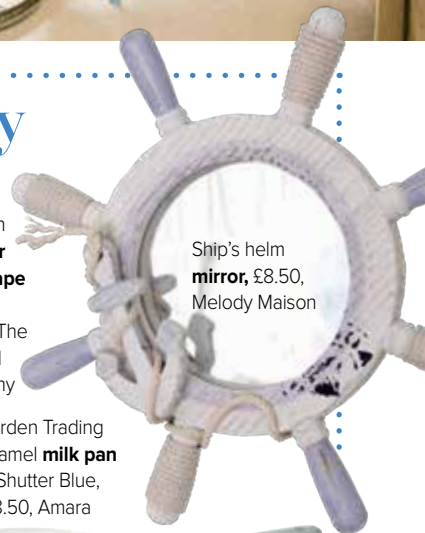


Red striped **linen cushion**, £32.95, Coastal Home

Striped **linen cushion** in Natural, £20, The Contemporary Home



Wooden **harbour landscape scene**, £14.99, The Nautical Company



Ship's helm **mirror**, £8.50, Melody Maison



Shore driftwood **drum side table**, £245, Alexander & Pearl

Enamel **coffee pot** in Shutter Blue, £25, Coastal Home



Rope heart **tea-light holder**, from £6, The Contemporary Home



Garden Trading enamel **milk pan** in Shutter Blue, £18.50, Amara



Whitewashed panel effect **wallpaper**, £40 per roll, Decor Wallpaper



Set of three **blue bottles**, £10, The Contemporary Home



Bossy **chair**, £250 for 2, Loaf



Marius reclaimed wood **chest of drawers**, £495, Modish Living



Whitewashed **bird ornaments**, £20 for 2, The Contemporary Home



Balinese cocoon swivel **chair**, £199.99, Dunelm



Hugo iron **chair**, £78, Oliver Bonas

Pretty and practical!



Embossed **salad turners**, £4; **salad bowl**, £8, all Marks & Spencer



Shaila **parasol** in Coral, £85, Out There Interiors



Stacking **wine glasses**, £16 for 4, House of Fraser

Let's go OUTSIDE

Love every minute of the time you spend outdoors this summer with the hottest accessories around



Copa **outdoor aperitif set** in Spectrum Pink, £399, Made.com



Floral **drinks dispenser**, £17.50, Marks & Spencer



Great value

Mini **lanterns**, £10 each, House of Fraser

La Hacienda steel Colorado medium **chiminea**, £124.95, White Stores



Feature: Gary Irwin

Outdoor style



Hothouse floral dinner plate, £5; striped bowl, £4, both Navigate at John Lewis



Mix and match florals with stripes!



Green marble deckchair sling, £15; deckchair frame, £40, both House by John Lewis



Seville table, £150; Seville chairs, £99 for 2; Seville benches, £60 each; striped seat pads, £20 for 2; accessories, from £16, all Next



Paina tray, £17.95, Joss & Main



Colourful drinks carrier

Fill with summer punch!



Hibiscus flower print acrylic jug, £8, Tesco

Earn your stripes with summer's coolest print



Cortardo table and chairs set, £249, Marks & Spencer



Hang-In-Out Double Cocoon, £325, Amara

Gorgeous real garden

Nice & easy does it!

Frances Pledger, from London, shares how she transformed her unloved plot into a chic, low-maintenance space



When I moved into my home, a 1930s semi, it was in need of a complete renovation. My plan included a kitchen extension with folding glass doors across the length of the back wall. But I soon realised the threadbare garden looked so awful that it needed tackling before I could start decorating the house.

Fortunately, I had a clear idea of what I wanted from my garden. It needed to be modern and easy to look after, and I wanted it to feel like an outdoor room, where I could sit, chat with friends and have a barbecue. My hobbies are cycling and oil painting, and a large shed for storing bikes and art equipment was also a must.

I knew I wanted a patio and some grass in my garden but, beyond that, I was stuck for ideas. So I turned to my friend James, a landscape gardener (classichertslandscapes.com), for advice and practical help. He drew a plan of the garden, combining patio areas, a path, a lawn, raised beds and space for a shed.

James suggested maintenance-free paving instead of decking, using slabs in mixed rather than uniform sizes for an informal look. He also proposed positioning the shed at the back of the garden, with a second, smaller patio area in front of it so I could use both ends of the garden to make the most of the sun. Finally, the flower beds would be replanted with low-maintenance plants, and James would add some smaller, raised beds. While he sourced all the materials, I started hunting for a shed. Having looked at lots that seemed rather flimsy, I settled on a heavy-duty timber one from Wickes. ➔





SUPER STORAGE

(ABOVE) 'At first, I thought the shed would dominate the garden,' says Frances. 'But painted in this colour, it blends in beautifully.'

BENCH MARK

(ABOVE AND LEFT) 'I've had this bench for about 10 years and love the way it's weathered,' says Frances.

'It's a great place to sit and soak up the sun during the day.'

PERFECT PAVING

(LEFT) Textured sandstone paving is a practical choice, as it just needs an occasional hose to stay looking its best.



Gorgeous real garden



‘I really love the way the outdoor space now feels like an extension of the house’



James dug up the former tatty lawn, removed the old-fashioned crazy paving path and dismantled the existing shed before levelling the ground. Fortunately, a gate at the bottom of the garden opens on to an access road, so he didn't have to bring everything through the house. He then replaced some of the fence panels with smart new tongue and groove ones, laid the paving, and turfed the lawn into a neat rectangle.

The garden was shaping up and the time had come to choose some plants. First, James created three raised beds – one next to the shed and the other two close to the house, using oak railway sleepers. He filled them with hardy shrubs and plants, including fragrant lavender, which I love. The bigger beds were planted with a variety of foliage plants, which just require occasional pruning.

By this stage, the work was almost finished. To make the new shed less prominent, I painted it blue/green, so that it blends in with the foliage and is protected from the elements. I also bought some weathered terracotta pots in a sale at a local store and filled them with lavender. The bench and bistro set came from my previous home.

I really love the way I can now slide back the kitchen doors and the outdoor space feels like another room. And adding a second patio area at the back of the garden was an inspired idea. The garden really feels like an extension of the house.'

MATCH POINT (TOP RIGHT) The stylish garden complements Frances's newly renovated house.

'I like the way the left side of the path lines up with the edge of the door frame,' she says.

BISTRO STYLE (TOP LEFT) This classic bistro set can stay outside in all weather conditions so Frances doesn't have to worry about covering it when it starts to rain.

RAISED BED (RIGHT) The raised beds were made by James from robust railway sleepers.



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you can achieve
after a great night's sleep



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The secret to
a great night's sleep

Girl about the house

To celebrate the centenary of the Women's Institute, we've picked some of the WI's top tips to help you become a domestic goddess!



GET KITCHEN CLEVER

To check if an egg is fresh, put it in water. If it floats, it's off – if it sinks, it's fine!

Keep hard avocados next to bananas. The ethylene gas in the bananas will ripen them.

To remove insects from veggies, fill the sink with cold water and add 1tsp of salt. The insects will sink to the bottom.

Hold a stale baguette under a running cold tap, give it a few shakes, pop in the oven for 10 mins and it'll be good as new.

To get rid of onion smells on your hands, rub them on metal.

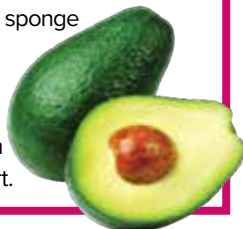
If you have leftover cream, freeze and use for sauces.

For instant, crispy croutons, remove the crusts from white bread, cut into squares and microwave on high for 1 min.

To avoid rack marks on a cooling cake, top the cooling rack with a tea towel first.

Use raspberry jam

in a Victoria sponge as the pips stop the top and bottom from sliding apart.



REVIVE YOUR WARDROBE

Run a wire hanger over your clothes before you wear them to remove static.

Add 1tbsp of vinegar to the water when hand washing silk items for a professional crispness.

Use a new disposable razor (carefully!) to de-bobble jumpers.

Put bicarbonate of soda or citrus peel inside shoes overnight to freshen them.

Store pleated skirts in the leg of a pair of tights to stop the pleats from being pulled apart by the hanger.

If suede looks tired, revive with steam from a kettle, then get marks off with an emery board.



TRICKS FOR THE HOME

To remove tea stains from cups, use a kitchen towel and rub the stained areas with salt or bicarbonate of soda. The abrasive action will remove the marks.

To make your bin easier to clean, put a sheet of kitchen roll in the bottom – it helps catch any leaks and bits that miss the bag.

To remove limescale from an electric kettle, cover the element with white or malt vinegar and bring to the boil. Give the kettle a shake, allow to cool, then rinse.

To get rid of weeds on paths and patios, add 125g salt to 1 litre of cold water, stir until it dissolves and splash over.

PERFECT PRESERVES

✿ Warm citrus fruit before making jam to obtain the most juice.

✿ Skim the scum frequently while the jam is boiling or add a small knob of butter to disperse it.

✿ To skin peaches and tomatoes easily, first place them in boiling water for 1 min, followed by cold water for a few mins.

✿ Warm sugar before adding to preserves so it dissolves quicker.



Get fruity!

To mark the WI's anniversary, two of its members volunteered to bake 5,000 slices of fruit cake in their own kitchens for the Annual Meeting celebrations! Here, they reveal their tips if you're baking your own...

Anne Harrison (pictured, right), from Leyburn, North Yorkshire, says: 'Always use the best quality ingredients you can afford. Butter gives a good flavour – soften before creaming with a dark brown sugar. Turn down the oven as necessary.'

Patricia Tulip (far right), from Alnwick, Northumberland, says: 'Line your tin with two layers of greaseproof paper and protect the outside of the tin with a layer of newspaper or brown paper – these look after the cake during cooking.'





White lace-effect lanterns, £25 each; Amelie chairs, £80 for 2; seat pads, £7 each; other accessories on table, from £3, all BHS



Party time

I love outdoor parties, as it doesn't matter if your furniture and table settings don't match – an informed mix of colours looks great. Simply create a focal point with lanterns, either dotted around or hung over the table, and finish the setting with freshly picked flowers. All you need to add are the guests!

PATTIE BARRON'S TOP PLANTS FOR LAZY GARDENERS!

These pretty flowers have low-maintenance demands. Simply water regularly and add liquid feed once a week.

ROSE 'FOR YOUR EYES ONLY'

Thirty years in the making, 'For Your Eyes Only' is officially **Rose of the Year 2015**. Its blooms are a luscious blend of sunset shades and it will flower throughout the summer.

What it needs: Well-drained, fertile soil **Where to plant it:** In a border or container



CALIBRACHOA 'BLACK CHERRY'

With a seemingly never-ending supply of velvety-black flowers, Calibrachoa 'Black Cherry' looks sensational on its own, but also complements light or bright container plants.

What it needs: A sunny situation **Where to plant it:** In any summer container



FUCHSIA 'LADY IN BLACK'

In just a season, this elegant fuchsia 'Lady In Black' will clamber up a fence or obelisk, smothering it with plum-tinted leaves and hanging bellflowers that are richly coloured. **What it needs:** Full sun or part shade **Where to plant it:** On the patio



PELARGONIUM 'BARBE BLEU'

Drought-tolerant pelargoniums are the can't-fail stars of summer. 'Barbe Bleu' has claret-coloured blooms that carry on flowering until the first frost. **What it needs:** Full sun or part shade **Where to plant it:** In baskets or windowboxes



For more of Pattie's top plants, see prima.co.uk



DESIGN WITH HEART

Hats off to George Home for nurturing new design talent in a collaboration with The Prince's Trust charity. Two young designers, Sophie Best, 25, and Deborah Ballinger, 26, have each created a limited-edition collection, Homespun (above) and Palm Springs, respectively. Both feature quirky designs and promise to bring designer style with heart to your home at fab prices. We love these Palm Springs candles (below), £5 for 3.



Style it, grow it, love it!



Buy of the month

YOUR LICENCE TO GRILL

I enjoy a good barbecue, but don't have space outside for a beast of a grill. That's why this beauty from Bar-Be-Quick caught my eye. With its colourful good looks, it can fit snugly into a corner of the garden. It's sturdy yet light, and the clip-on lid allows for authentic smokehouse-style grilling. £20, Bar-Be-Quick

POTS WITH PIZZAZZ

Show off your garden's gorgeous greenery in style

Get groovy this summer by bringing some colour to your garden in unexpected ways. I love these bright, graphic-print pots made from frost and fade-proof plastic. They're also lightweight and easy to manoeuvre. From £13, Hum



PRESENTING THE TETLEY BLEND COLLECTION

Three quality brews,
blended for you



That's better. That's Tetley.

Grill seekers

Fire up the coals and cook some amazing barbecue dishes for family and friends this summer – flaming good times guaranteed!





Try this
You can skewer these ahead, but don't add the marinade too early as the lime will start to 'cook' the prawns.

Coriander & chilli prawn skewers

They are pricey, but these prawns have real 'wow factor' for a special occasion.

MAKES 8 SKEWERS PREP: 10 mins

COOK: 15 mins TOTAL COST: £24.06

- About 32 large raw shell-on prawns (roughly 4 prawns per skewer)

FOR THE MARINADE:

- About 2-3tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Handful of coriander leaves, finely chopped

- 1 clove of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 green chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- Juice of 1 lime

YOU WILL NEED: A selection of metal or soaked wooden skewers

- First, make the marinade: mix together the extra virgin olive oil, coriander, garlic, chilli and lime juice, then season well with sea salt and lots of freshly ground black pepper.

- Add prawns to marinade and turn to coat. Thread about 4 prawns on to each skewer and drizzle over any remaining marinade. When ready to cook, place skewers on a hot barbecue for a couple of mins, then turn and cook for a further couple of mins (keep turning until prawns are all pink). Remove and transfer to a plate for serving.

PER SERVING: KCALS 82; FAT 3g;
SAT FAT 0.5g; CARBS 0g

Spicy squid & lemongrass

Perfect to serve with the prawn skewers.

MAKES 8 SKEWERS PREP: 15 mins

COOK: 15 mins TOTAL COST: £6.12

- About 900g/2lb squid, cleaned (your fishmonger can prepare this for you)
- FOR THE MARINADE:
- 1 lemongrass stalk, trimmed, stripped and finely chopped

- 2tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- 2 spring onions, trimmed and finely chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon

YOU WILL NEED: A selection of metal or soaked wooden skewers

- First, make the marinade: mix together the lemongrass, oil, chilli, spring onions

and lemon juice and season well with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

• When ready to cook, add squid to marinade and squish around to coat. Thread squid on to skewers and cook on the barbecue over a hot heat for about 2 to 3 mins on each side.

PER SERVING: KCALS 92; FAT 2g; SAT FAT 0.5; CARBS 1.5g

Korean chicken

Sticky chicken's a real taste sensation and always the star of the barbecue!

SERVES 8

PREP: 20 mins, plus marinating time

COOK: 1 hr TOTAL COST: £11.03

- 1 whole chicken (preferably free-range), jointed (ask your butcher to do this)
- 1-2 bunches of spring onions, trimmed, to serve
- Handful of sesame seeds, toasted, to serve

FOR THE MARINADE:

- 4 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 350g/12oz shallots, peeled
- 100ml/3½fl oz sesame oil
- 3tbsp dark soy sauce
- 2tbsp mirin, or rice vinegar, or dry sherry
- Pinch of chilli flakes

- 10cm/4in piece of fresh ginger, peeled

• Make the marinade: add garlic and shallots to a food processor and blitz until very finely chopped, then pour in the sesame oil, soy sauce, mirin, chilli flakes and ginger and whizz again. Season well and mix again.

• Smother marinade over chicken, reserving a little. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hr, or overnight, if you have time.

• When ready to cook, remove chicken from marinade, shaking off any excess, then add to a medium-hot barbecue and cook, turning frequently, for about 10 mins to 1 hr depending on cut of chicken (bone-in will take much longer). Towards the end of cooking, keep brushing with a little of the reserved marinade until golden all over. Dip spring onions in the reserved marinade and cook for a few mins until charred. Once the chicken is cooked through, serve sprinkled with sesame seeds and spring onions on the side.

PER SERVING: KCALS 283; FAT 13.5g; SAT FAT 2.5g; CARBS 8.5g



GUIDE TO BARBECUING CHICKEN

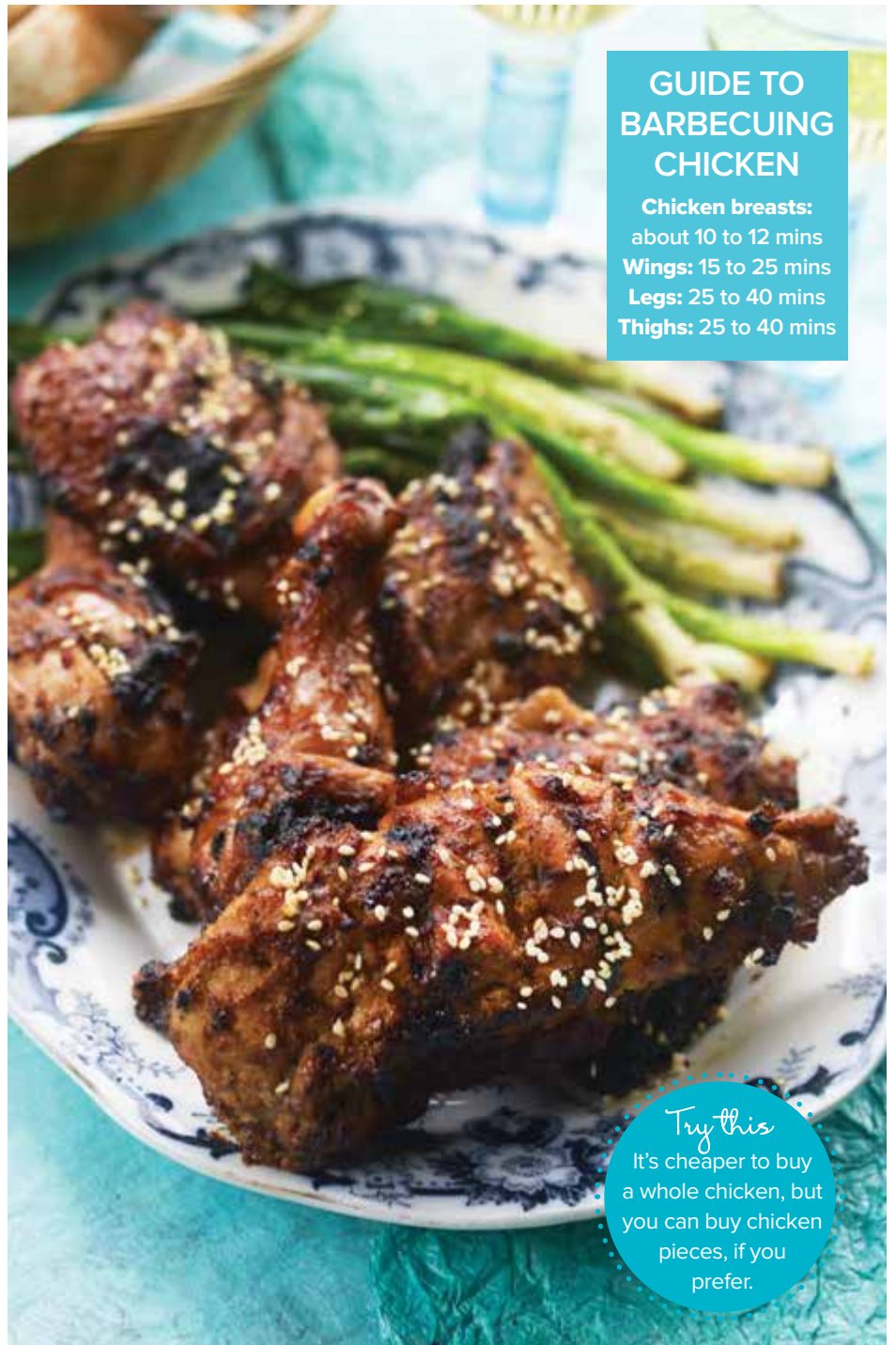
Chicken breasts:

about 10 to 12 mins

Wings: 15 to 25 mins

Legs: 25 to 40 mins

Thighs: 25 to 40 mins



Try this

It's cheaper to buy a whole chicken, but you can buy chicken pieces, if you prefer.



Jerk pork belly

This is finger lickin' good with a fiery kick!

SERVES 8 PREP: 15 mins

COOK: 3 hrs 20 mins TOTAL COST: £12.63

- About 2kg/4½lb pork belly, bones out (you can ask your butcher to do this)

FOR THE JERK SAUCE:

- Bunch of spring onions, roughly chopped
- 1 bulb of garlic, peeled
- 1 scotch bonnet chilli, or 2 regular red chillies, roughly chopped
- Handful of thyme leaves, plus extra for garnish
- 1tsp black or pink peppercorns
- 1tsp ground cloves
- 1tsp ground allspice
- 1tsp cinnamon
- 150ml/5fl oz white wine vinegar
- 2-3tbsp dark brown sugar

● Preheat oven to gas mark 2/150°C (130°C in a fan oven). First, make the jerk sauce: add the spring onions, garlic, chilli, thyme and peppercorns to a food processor and blitz until smooth. Add the cloves, allspice, cinnamon, vinegar and sugar and season with sea salt. Whizz again until combined.

● Sit pork belly in a large roasting tin and slather jerk sauce over both sides. Cover with foil and put in oven for about 3 hrs until pork is tender. Remove and set aside.

● Preheat barbecue to hot then, once there are no flames, add the pork and cook for about 10 mins on each side, turning frequently, until golden and slightly charred. Remove and sit on a large board, slice into strips and garnish with thyme leaves.

PER SERVING: KCALS 497; FAT 38g; SAT FAT 14g; CARBS 4g

Lamb and mint burgers

A great flavour combination that will have your guests coming back for more – and more!

MAKES 8 PREP: 20 mins, plus chilling

COOK: 20 mins TOTAL COST: £9.83

- 900g/2lb lamb mince
- Large handful of mint leaves, finely chopped, plus leaves to garnish
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- Flour, for dusting
- 8 bread rolls, halved
- Handful of baby gem lettuce, or leaves of your choice

- 1 red onion, peeled and sliced into rings
- About 4-6 tomatoes, sliced
- Tzatziki, to serve

● Put lamb mince and mint in a bowl, season well and mix together. Add the egg and squish together, using your hands, until really well combined.

● With floured hands, divide mixture into 8 even pieces, then roll each piece into a ball and flatten into a burger. Sit the burgers in the fridge, layered between sheets of greaseproof paper, to firm up for at least an hour or so (you could do this a day ahead, if you like).

● When ready to cook, place half the burgers on to a medium-hot barbecue and flatten with a palette knife, then leave for about 5 mins. Carefully turn over the burgers and cook the other side for a few mins until cooked through – about 10 mins in total. Repeat with the remaining burgers. Add bread rolls to the barbecue for 1 min each side, then top each with lettuce, onion, a burger, tomato and more red onion. Serve with a dollop of tzatziki, some black pepper and mint.

PER SERVING: KCALS 432; FAT 17.5g; SAT FAT 7.5g; CARBS 40g ➔

Barbecue ideas



Try this

You could pile your burger with gherkins and tomato chutney, or put in a pitta with some houmous.

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your favourite Thai curry.



VEETEE.COM

Halloumi, fig & summer squash skewers

Lots of sweet, gutsy flavours in one bite – veggies will absolutely love 'em!

MAKES 8 SKEWERS PREP: 20 mins

COOK: 15 mins TOTAL COST: £9.96

- 1 small butternut squash, peeled, halved, deseeded and cut into chunky pieces
- 250g pack halloumi, cut into chunky cubes
- 2 green peppers, halved, deseeded and cut into chunky pieces

- 4 fresh figs, sliced

FOR THE DRESSING:

- 4tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1-2tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1tbsp pomegranate molasses
- Few oregano leaves, finely chopped
- Pinch of sugar, to taste

YOU WILL NEED: 8 metal skewers

• Prepare the dressing: mix together all the ingredients and season well. Set aside. Add the butternut squash to a pan of boiling, salted water and cook for

about 3 to 5 mins until just tender (don't overcook). Drain well and leave to cool.

• Thread the skewers with alternate pieces of squash, halloumi, pepper and fig, then brush with a little dressing and sit on a medium-hot barbecue. Cook for about 10 to 12 mins, turning frequently. Transfer to a serving plate, drizzle over a little of the dressing and serve the rest in a small bowl on the side.

PER SERVING: KCALS 210; FAT 13.5g; SAT FAT 6g; CARBS 17g ➔



Try this
Sprinkle with
pomegranate seeds
and mint leaves to
serve, if you like.

Chickpeas with carrot, mango, mint & almonds

SERVES 8

PREP: 15 mins COOK: 5 mins TOTAL COST: £8.92

- First, make the dressing: mix together 3tbsp extra virgin olive oil, 1tbsp white wine vinegar, 1tsp sugar and a small handful of finely chopped mint leaves. Season well, taste and sweeten some more, if needed. Put to one side.
 - Add 1 mango (halved, stoned, peeled and cut into small squares) to a hot frying pan and cook for a few mins until golden, then put to one side.
 - Tip 2 x 420g cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed, into a large bowl and mix with 4-6 carrots (grated) and a small handful of whole blanched almonds. Toss with the dressing, then transfer to a serving dish and top with extra almonds, a few mint leaves and the mango.
- PER SERVING: KCALS 136; FAT 6g; SAT FAT 1g; CARBS 19g



Asian greens & lemongrass dressing

SERVES 8

PREP: 15 mins COOK: 10 mins
TOTAL COST: £9.87

- Add 2 packs of pak choi (leaves separated) to a pan of boiling, salted water and cook for 3 to 4 mins to soften. Remove with a slotted spoon, then add 150g/5oz frozen soya beans to the water and cook for 3 to 4 mins. Drain well and put to one side.
 - While that's cooking, make the dressing: mix together 3tbsp extra virgin olive oil, 1tbsp white wine vinegar, a 5cm/2in piece of fresh ginger (peeled and grated) and 1 lemongrass stalk (trimmed, outer coat removed and finely diced). Season well.
 - Add the pak choi and soya beans to a large bowl and tip in a 200g pack sugar snaps (sliced lengthways), 2-3 segmented oranges, 1 green chilli (sliced), and a small handful of coriander leaves. Mix to combine, then pour over dressing and toss together. Transfer to a clean dish and top with another small handful of coriander leaves to serve.
- PER SERVING: KCALS 323; FAT 12.5g; SAT FAT 4g; CARBS 42g



Potato salad with spring onions & shredded chicory

SERVES 8

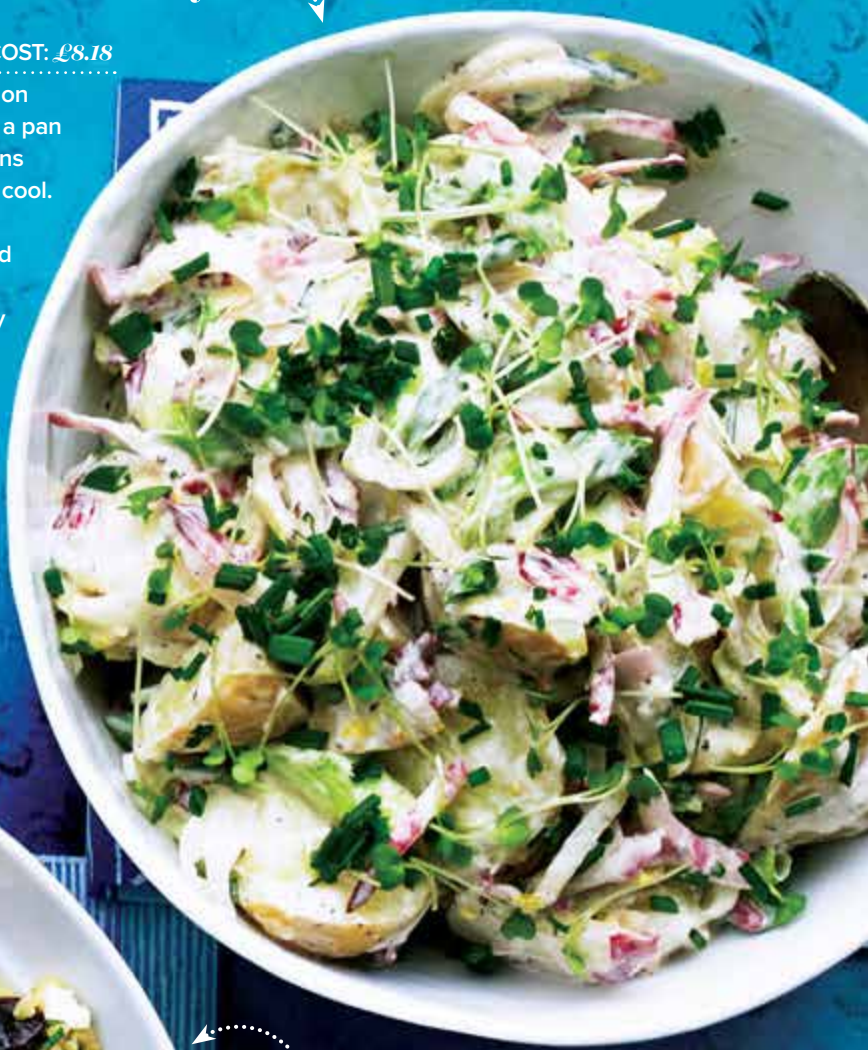
PREP: 15 mins COOK: 20 mins TOTAL COST: £8.18

● Cook 900g/2lb waxy potatoes (skin on and chopped into bite-sized pieces) in a pan of boiling, salted water for about 15 mins or until tender. Drain well and leave to cool.

● Tip potatoes into a large bowl, add a bunch of trimmed and finely chopped spring onions, 1 head each of red and green chicory (both trimmed and finely sliced), a handful of finely chopped dill and a handful of finely chopped flat-leaf parsley. Season well.

● Mix in about 4-5tbsp of mayo, transfer to a serving dish and top with a handful of finely chopped chives and a handful of cress.

PER SERVING: KCALS 136; FAT 6g; SAT FAT 1g; CARBS 19g



Bulgar wheat with feta

SERVES 8

PREP: 15 mins COOK: 15 mins TOTAL COST: £9.09

● For the dressing: mix together 3tbsp extra virgin olive oil, 1tbsp white wine vinegar, a pinch of dried oregano, juice and zest of 1 lemon and a pinch of sugar, if you like. Season and put aside.

● Add 350g/12oz bulgar wheat to a medium-sized pan, pour over 500ml/18fl oz hot vegetable stock to sit about 2.5cm/1in above bulgar (there may be some left over). Season and simmer gently for 10 to 15 mins until stock is absorbed. Tip into a large bowl and mix in the dressing while still warm. Set aside.

● Heat oil in a frying pan, add 2 small red onions (peeled and cut into eighths) and cook for 2 to 3 mins to soften. Add 2 finely chopped cloves of garlic and cook for 1 min. Throw in 3-4 courgettes (cut into batons) and cook for 4 to 5 mins until golden.

● Tip into bulgar wheat with a handful of pitted and finely chopped dates, a handful of sour cherries (halved), a handful of chopped dill and 100g/4oz feta. Mix well. To serve, top with 50g/2oz feta.

PER SERVING: KCALS 323; FAT 12.5g;

SAT FAT 4g; CARBS 42g



Summer desserts

Strawberry delights



Try this
You can flavour the
creamy mixture with
lemon or orange zest,
or try a drop of rose
water. Yum!

Summer's here and that means ripe, juicy
strawberries – perfect for making a divine
and rather decadent dessert

Strawberry cheesecake

This showstopper is heaven on a plate.

SERVES 10

PREP: 20 mins, plus overnight chilling

COOK: 1 hr 35 mins TOTAL COST: £12.49

You can make this one day ahead

- 50-75g/2-3oz butter, melted
- 200g/7oz digestive biscuits, crushed
- 400g/14oz full fat cream cheese
- 200g/7oz caster sugar
- 375g/13oz ricotta
- 100ml/3½fl oz double cream
- 3 eggs
- 1tbsp cornflour
- 1 vanilla pod, halved lengthways and seeds removed
- 2 x 200g cartons strawberries, hulled and halved (leave some whole for topping)
- About 2tbsp sugar
- Few pistachio nuts, finely chopped, to decorate (optional)
- Rose petals, to decorate (optional)

YOU WILL NEED: A 20.5cm/8in round, deep loose-bottom tin, greased and lined

- Melt butter in a pan, then add crushed biscuits and mix until well combined. Transfer into tin and press firmly to create an even layer. When cool, sit tin in fridge overnight to chill and firm.
 - To make the filling, add cream cheese and sugar to the bowl of a food mixer and beat until creamy. Mix in ricotta and cream, then add eggs one at a time, beating slowly after each addition so it all mixes together. Stir through cornflour and vanilla seeds. Spoon about a third of the mixture into the tin, then sit halved strawberries, point-side down, around the edge. Add remaining mixture and smooth the top.
 - Preheat oven to gas mark 1, 140°C (120°C in a fan oven). Put in oven for 60 to 90 mins until set (it should still wobble in the middle and will continue to set as it cools). Leave in oven to cool completely (this should help to stop it from cracking), then chill overnight. To decorate, add sugar to a pan with 125ml/4fl oz water and heat for few mins until sugar dissolves. Leave to cool. Then add strawberries and stir so all are coated. Put aside. Loosen edges of cake from tin then release, spoon over strawberry mixture and top with pistachio nuts and rose petals, if using. Enjoy it sliced with a drizzle of double cream.
- PER SERVING: KCALS 542; FAT 37g; SAT FAT 22g; CARBS 40g



Try this
To help you get some bubbles into the jellies, make sure your Prosecco is super cold!

Strawberry Prosecco jellies

These grown-up jellies are just divine!

MAKES 6-8

PREP: 15 mins, plus overnight setting

COOK: 5 mins TOTAL COST: £11.03

You can make these one day ahead

- 250g carton sweet strawberries, hulled, plus a handful, sliced, for setting in jelly
- About 8tbsp sugar (use less if strawberries are super sweet)
- 5 gelatine leaves
- 500ml/18fl oz Prosecco, chilled
- Mint leaves, to decorate

YOU WILL NEED: 6 to 8 Champagne flutes or small glass serving dishes

- Put most of strawberries in a pan with sugar and 250ml/9fl oz water. Simmer until soft (3 to 4 mins), then pass through a fine sieve, jelly bag or a piece of muslin (get out as much syrup as you can).

- Add gelatine to a bowl, pour over cold water to cover, then leave for about 8 to 10 mins until soft. While that's soaking, gently heat strawberry syrup in a pan until warm, drain gelatine and add to syrup. Stir until gelatine dissolves (use a balloon whisk to ensure no lumps).
 - When it has cooled, put strawberry syrup in fridge to chill. Once chilled, slowly pour in Prosecco and give it a gentle stir (you don't want it to be frothy). Now, carefully pour mixture into Champagne flutes or glass dishes and add a few strawberry pieces to each, pushing them down slightly. Put in fridge and leave to set overnight. Top with a mint leaf and serve with some long spoons so you can reach the bottom of the glasses!
- PER SERVING: KCALS 153-115; FAT 0g; SAT FAT 0g; CARBS 24-17g





Try this
You can make the
pastry cases and crème
patissière ahead and
assemble them at the
last minute.

Strawberry shortcakes

These sweet and crumbly shortcakes are delicious, especially with clotted cream.

MAKES ABOUT 16 ROUNDS

PREP: 20 mins COOK: 15 mins

TOTAL COST: £9.27

- 300g/11oz plain flour
- 2tsp baking powder
- 100g/3½oz caster sugar
- 125g/4oz butter, cold and cut into cubes
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- About 125ml/4fl oz milk
- 1 egg, lightly beaten for egg wash
- Icing sugar, for dusting

FOR THE FILLING:

- 227g carton clotted cream
- 250g carton strawberries, hulled and sliced

YOU WILL NEED: A lightly greased baking sheet and a round cutter about 7.5cm/3in

● Preheat oven to gas mark 7/220°C (200°C in a fan oven). Put flour, baking powder and sugar in a bowl and add a pinch of salt. Add cold butter and rub it in using your fingertips until it forms crumbs. Then, tip in egg and use a round-ended knife to combine. Slowly pour in milk and bring dough together using your hands (dust hands with flour first).

● Transfer dough to a lightly floured board and roll out so it is about 2cm/¾in thick, then cut out rounds with the cutter and sit them on the baking sheet. Brush tops with egg wash and put in oven to bake for 10 to 15 mins until golden. Remove from oven, leave for 2 mins, then transfer to a wire rack to cool (you can serve them warm, if you like).

● Add a dollop of cream to half the shortcake rounds, top with strawberries, then sit the other half on top and lightly dust with icing sugar. Transfer to a plate and enjoy! Best eaten on the day of baking. PER SERVING: KCALS 260; FAT 17g; SAT FAT 10g; CARBS 23g

Strawberry tarts

So decadent – perfect for afternoon tea!

MAKES 8-10

PREP: 20 mins COOK: 20 mins

TOTAL COST: £9.18

- 500g pack ready-made sweet dessert pastry (there will be some left over)
- Flour, for dusting
- 1 egg, lightly beaten for egg wash
- About 2tbsp sugar
- 250g/9oz strawberries, hulled and sliced into fan shapes

FOR THE CREME PATISSIERE:

- 4 egg yolks
- 100g/3½oz sugar
- 25g/1oz cornflour
- 350ml/12fl oz full fat milk
- 1 vanilla pod, split lengthways

YOU WILL NEED: 8 to 10 round loose-bottom mini fluted flan tins, about 6.5cm/2½in, baking beans and parchment paper

● Preheat oven to gas mark 6/200°C (180°C in a fan oven), roll out pastry on to a lightly floured board and cut out 8 to 10 rounds larger than the flan tins. Drape pastry over

each tin, leaving edges overlapping. Fill with parchment paper and baking beans. Put in oven for about 12 to 15 mins until pale golden. Take out of oven, remove beans and paper, brush bottom of each pastry case with egg wash, then put back in oven for 2 mins to crisp up bases. Remove and, when cool, trim pastry edges and remove pastry cases from tins. Put aside.

● To make crème patissière, whisk egg yolks and sugar together, then stir in cornflour. Add milk and vanilla pod to a pan, bring almost to the boil, then remove from heat and put to one side for 10 mins to let the vanilla infuse. Remove pod and pour milk into egg mixture and stir well. Clean out the pan then return mixture and heat gently until it starts to thicken. Transfer to a bowl, cover with greaseproof paper and leave to cool. Then, put it into fridge to chill and thicken further.

● To make the glaze, add sugar to a pan with 125ml/4fl oz water and heat for few mins until sugar dissolves. Put aside to cool. Spoon cold crème patissière into each tart case, top with fanned strawberries and glaze.

PER SERVING: KCALS 438-350; FAT 23-18g; SAT FAT 7.5-6g; CARBS 51-41g

Summer desserts



Try this

If you can, try not to handle the dough too much – then you'll have light and airy shortcakes.

Time to chill

Make this summer extra special with Carte D'Or ice cream. These mouth-watering puds are sure to wow your friends and family



Carte D'Or Strawberry and Vanilla summer roulade

This works with any of the delicious Carte D'Or ice creams, so mix and match different flavour combos!

SERVES 8

PREP: 45 mins, plus cooling and freezing COOK: 12 mins

- 125g (4oz) caster sugar, plus extra for dusting
- 3 large eggs
- 125g (4oz) self-raising flour
- 200g (7oz) Carte D'Or Vanilla ice cream, softened in the fridge for 15 to 20 mins
- 200g (7oz) Carte D'Or Strawberry ice cream, softened in the fridge for 15 to 20 mins
- 3tbsp strawberry jam
- Icing sugar, to serve
- Fresh strawberries, to serve
- Preheat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan) gas mark 4. Line a 33x23cm (13x9in) Swiss roll tin with baking

parchment. In a large bowl, whisk the sugar and eggs until thick and fluffy, about 10 mins. Sieve over the flour; fold in. Pour into the prepared tin and smooth surface. Bake for 10 to 12 mins.

● Cut a piece of parchment paper, larger than the sponge, and dust with caster sugar. Invert the sponge on to the parchment paper, peel away the lining paper on top.

● Score a line 1cm (½in) in from the short edge (this makes it easier to roll). Using the incision, roll the sponge with the dusted parchment inside (stops the sponge sticking). Leave to cool seam-side down.

● While the sponge is cooling, soften the ice cream in the fridge and then ripple together (being careful not to over mix). When the sponge is cool, unroll and spread over the jam and then the ice cream, leaving a 1cm (½in) border around the edges. Roll the sponge back up and wrap tightly, then return to the freezer until solid.

● Allow to soften at room temp for about 10 mins before serving in slices. Dust with icing sugar and serve with strawberries.



ETON MESS MERINGUES

This simple dinner party dessert looks sensational and sings of summer! To add an extra special touch, put a meringue nest on a delicate doily and top with a generous scoop of Carte D'Or Gelateria Eton Mess ice cream. Scatter over fresh summer berries, then drizzle with strawberry sauce and shavings of white chocolate.

JELLY AND ICE CREAM COCKTAILS

Try this grown-up version of a retro classic – served in sophisticated Champagne glasses! Make up the raspberry jelly according to pack instructions. Pour into Champagne glasses and scatter with fresh raspberries. Chill for 6 hrs, or overnight until set. Spoon Carte D'Or Strawberry ice cream on top and serve with a sprig of fresh mint.

Visit cartedorscoop.co.uk for more info on the Carte D'Or collection, including the Classic and Gelateria ranges.





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SPICED SALMON WITH SWEET
POTATO CHIPS & SALSA



SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH GRATED
COURGETTE & SPINACH

DINNERS IN A DASH

You don't want to be slaving in the kitchen after work on a summer evening, so cook something quick and delish in 30 minutes or less. And relax...



SIMPLE SUMMER PASTA



THAI-STYLE PORK MINCE
BALLS WITH NOODLES

Everyday cooking

Scrambled eggs with grated courgette & spinach

SERVES 4 PREP: 10 mins COOK: 20 mins TOTAL COST: £6.03

1tbsp olive oil
3 courgettes, grated or cut into fine strips
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
Pinch of paprika
Knob of butter

8 eggs, lightly beaten
250g bag spinach leaves

1 Heat olive oil in a frying pan, add courgettes and garlic, season, then add the paprika. Cook gently for 3 to 4 mins until softened, then remove from heat and transfer to a bowl.

2 Wipe out pan and add butter. When melted (don't let it brown), add the eggs, season really well and leave for 1 min then, over a medium-high heat, stir with a wooden spoon until well combined. Let them cook for about 10 seconds, then stir



continually until cooked to your liking (remember, they will continue to cook when removed from the heat so it's best to take the pan off when the eggs are still slightly runny).

3 Stir through courgettes and spinach until combined, then transfer to a dish. Serve with a tomato salad and crusty bread. PER SERVING: KCALS 263; FAT 20g; SAT FAT 6g; CARBS 3g

TIME SAVER For quick, perfect courgette strips, use the grating attachment on a food processor.

Spiced salmon with sweet potato chips & salsa

SERVES 4 PREP: 10 mins COOK: 20 mins TOTAL COST: £10.96

4 salmon fillets, with skin on
Juice and zest of 1 lime
1tbsp paprika

2-3tbsp olive oil
4-6 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into equal lengths

Lime wedges, to serve

FOR THE SALSA:

4 tomatoes, finely chopped

¼ cucumber, finely chopped

½ red onion, finely chopped

1 jalapeño chilli, or regular red chilli, finely chopped

Handful of parsley, finely chopped

Handful of coriander leaves, finely chopped

Juice of 1 lime

1 Preheat oven to gas mark 5/190°C (170°C in a fan oven). Sit salmon in a roasting tin. Mix lime juice and zest, paprika and 1tbsp of olive oil, season, then brush



over the salmon pieces to coat. Put in oven for about 20 mins, or until salmon is cooked through, then remove and set aside.

2 Next, add sweet potato to a roasting tin, toss with remaining oil and season. Put in oven for about 15 mins until tender and golden. Remove and set aside.

3 To make the salsa: add all the ingredients to a bowl, season and mix well. Serve the salmon with a side of sweet potato chips and salsa, and a lime wedge.

PER SERVING: KCALS 548; FAT 23g; SAT FAT 4g; CARBS 53g

Thai-style pork mince balls with noodles

SERVES 4 PREP: 10 mins COOK: 20 mins TOTAL COST: £9.18

400g/14oz pork mince
1 red chilli, deseeded and chopped
5cm/2in ginger, peeled and grated
Handful of coriander, chopped, plus leaves for garnish
Zest of 1 lime

2 spring onions, finely chopped
1 egg

About 2tbsp groundnut oil
2 x 150g pack udon noodles
¼ cucumber, cut into batons
Lime halves, for garnish

FOR THE SAUCE:

2tbsp sesame oil
3tbsp dark soy sauce
1tbsp mirin
Juice of 1 lime

About 2-3tbsp sugar

1 In a bowl, mix together pork mince, chilli, ginger, coriander, lime zest and spring onions (use your hands to squish together).



Add egg, mix again, and roll spoonfuls into small meatballs.

2 Heat a little oil in a frying pan. Cook a few balls at a time for several mins, turning, until just golden. Set aside. Add noodles to a pan of boiling, salted water to heat through, then drain and set aside.

3 Mix together sauce ingredients, season and tip into a pan. Add pork balls and allow to bubble. Serve with noodles, cucumber and limes on the side, and with coriander leaves scattered over. PER SERVING: KCALS 417; FAT 24g; SAT FAT 6g; CARBS 25g

Simple summer pasta

SERVES 4 PREP: 10 mins COOK: 15 mins TOTAL COST: £5.54

350g/12oz pasta shells, or pasta of your choice
Large handful of mixed cherry and yellow tomatoes, chopped
About 5tbsp good quality extra virgin olive oil

Large handful of basil leaves, roughly chopped, plus leaves for garnish

1 Add pasta to a pan of boiling, salted water and cook for about 12 mins, or until cooked al dente. Then drain and return pasta to pan with a little of the cooking water. Put to one side.

2 While that's cooking, add tomatoes to a bowl and season well with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Mix well.

3 Pour olive oil over the tomatoes, then add basil and turn to coat. Put to one side until ready to serve. Then, toss with the hot pasta and top with



a few basil leaves to garnish. Some crusty bread and a lightly dressed rocket salad make the perfect accompaniments to this dish.

PER SERVING: KCALS 436; FAT 15g; SAT FAT 2g; CARBS 64g

TIME SAVER You can make the tomato mixture in advance as the flavours will infuse even more. Plus, this pasta dish can be served hot or cold – it's delicious and so versatile!



Nature's harvest

It's so tempting to gorge on ripe berries and cherries right now, and you can pop them into tarts, pies, summer puddings and crumbles. The outdoors beckons for barbecues and picnics, too. Just think courgettes and fennel, griddled or marinated, served with mozzarella; decadent globe artichoke with lemony vinaigrette; and tomatoes baked with sea bass or seafood for a simple but delicious all-in-one tray bake.



Thoroughly modern muesli

Now you can have your breakfast on the go with these little pots of Bircher muesli, made with a scrumptious mix of jumbo oats and yoghurt. They come in five flavour combos that really hit the spot, such as elderflower and cranberry, and choco sour cherry. At 280 calories a pot, they are almost guilt-free too!

• Cuckoo Bircher muesli, £1.99 for 190g, Waitrose

Cool drinks for hot days

These are so refreshing and just a little different!

❶ **Jools green tea with popping pearls** (£1.88 for 300ml, Whole Foods). Delish flavours of apple, mango and cranberry, with flavoured pearls that pop in your mouth. Plus, only 90 cals per drink!



❷ **Drink Me skinny spiced chai** (£2 for 250g, Tesco). A blend of black tea, cloves, ginger, cardamom and cinnamon. Mix with hot water or blend with milk and ice for an iced latte.



❸ **Galvanina red grapefruit** (£1.59 for 355ml, Waitrose). Organic fruit and sparkling spring water makes this good to sip in the sun. Sweet with a bitter edge, it really quenches the thirst. Flavours also include Sicilian clementine and lemon.



Cook it, eat it, love it!

THE HEAT IS ON!

Give your bangers an exotic boost with this new **Fiery Sriracha Thai Classic sauce** from Heinz. It's made with an aromatic blend of chilli peppers and vinegar, but it's not too hot. You can also use it to take your stir-fry noodles to the next level!

• 98p for 220ml, Asda



SKINNY DIPPERS...

For a tasty snack, grab a bunch of celery and serve with a fab low-cal dip. Simply mix 170g carton of Fage Total 0% fat-free Greek yoghurt with one of the following combos...

- 2-3tsp of harissa and fresh mint, finely chopped
 - 2-3tsp grainy Dijon mustard and fresh tarragon, finely chopped
 - 1-2tsp red Thai paste and fresh coriander, finely chopped.
- Give it a good stir and then voilà – a delicious dip.

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SEE OVER THE PAGE FOR OUR FAB 12-PAGE MAKES SECTION ➔

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Sandals, £28, 3-9, Next

Little girls will love this spotty
dress! Pair it with slip-on
sandals for days at the beach.

Sandals, £9, 11-7, BHS



For where to buy, see page 160

Get making!

NEED TO KNOW

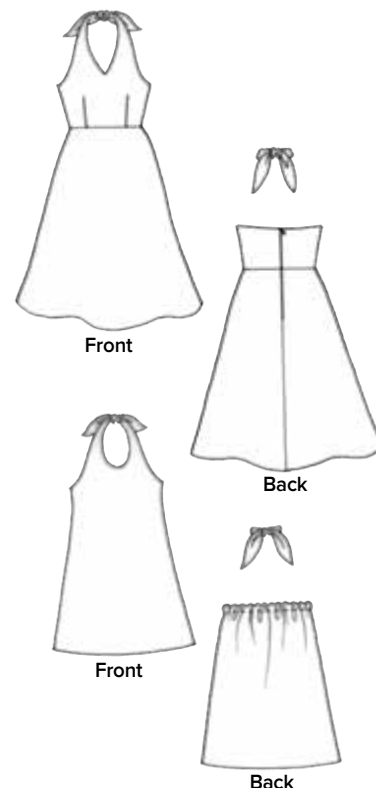
WOMEN'S SIZES 10-20

GIRLS' SIZES 2-8

The women's dress has a fitted bodice on a flared skirt. The halter neck ties at the back and the dress fastens with a centre back zip. The girls' A-line dress is elasticated across the back for a snug fit and the halter neck ties at the back.

FABRIC Choose cotton or fine linen. We used embroidered white cotton from Cloth House. The red spotted cotton and two printed cotton fabrics are from Mad Jak.

INSTRUCTIONS The pattern pieces, cutting layouts and sewing instructions are all included on the Prima pattern.



TO ORDER THIS MONTH'S EXCLUSIVE PRIMA PATTERN, call 0906 344 6851* (or, from the Republic of Ireland, 1560 716 141*). If you're a subscriber and have opted in, the Prima pattern will be included **free** every month with your copy of Prima.

*You must be over 18 to call. Calls cost £1.53 per minute from BT landlines (ROI €1.28 per minute) and should last no longer than two minutes. Network charges may vary. From 1st July 2015 UK calls will cost £1.50 per minute plus your network access charge. UK SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390. ROI SP: Phonovation/Spoke, 014378815. Lines close midnight, 31 July 2015. PLEASE ALLOW 28 DAYS FOR DELIVERY.

Slip into this fab floral frock and you'll be the best dressed guest at any summer event.

Sunglasses, £12, Accessorize.

Sandals, £69, 3-8, Dune

This dress is perfect for parties and picnics – just add a straw hat and metallic sandals!

Trilby, from £6.50;

sandals, from £18,

both 3-16 years, Next



This month, customising expert Lisa Comfort shows you how to transform a pair of jeans that have seen better days into a fab denim skirt – perfect for summer!

LISA COMFORT CUSTOMISES IT!



FUNKY DENIM SKIRT

When your beloved jeans wear in the knee or on the inside seam, don't fret. There's no need to throw them away – you can simply turn them into a skirt. And it's easier to make than it sounds, I promise! Here's what you need...



THE KIT

- A pair of jeans
- Tape measure
- Pins
- Tailor's chalk
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Thread
- Sewing machine

THE STEPS



1 First, decide how long you want your skirt to be, measuring from the waist down. Mark with a pin.



2 Measure up from the hem, 1 inch below the pin, marking with chalk. Move across the leg, marking this measurement with chalk. Connect the marks with a ruler and draw a line. This is your cutting line. Repeat on the other leg.



3 Ensuring the jeans are lying flat, cut along the line through both layers of denim. You should now have shorts! Cut along the inside seam up to the crotch on both legs. At the front crotch, continue to cut along the seam, until just below the bottom of the fly. Repeat this at the back crotch, cutting to a similar position.

4 Overlap the front crotch seams so they sit flat. Then

pin in place. Next, repeat this step with the back crotch seams.

5 Using leftover denim from the legs, cut out 2 rectangular patches, one for the front and one for the back. They need to be bigger than the triangle-shaped gap you have.



6 Tuck the denim patches inside the skirt, lining them up with the skirt hem. Pin in place along the cut seam edges of the skirt.



7 On the sewing machine, edgestitch (a straight stitch 2mm from the edge) along the front crotch seam, pivoting and sewing down one side of the triangle. Then sew the other side. Repeat this for the back.

8 The denim patches should now be securely stitched. Turn the skirt inside out and trim away the excess denim, leaving about 1cm from the stitching.

9 Draw a new hemline 1 inch from the cut edge and cut. If you like, you can pull on some of the thread to give the skirt an on-trend frayed edge. Team with cute pumps and you're good to go!

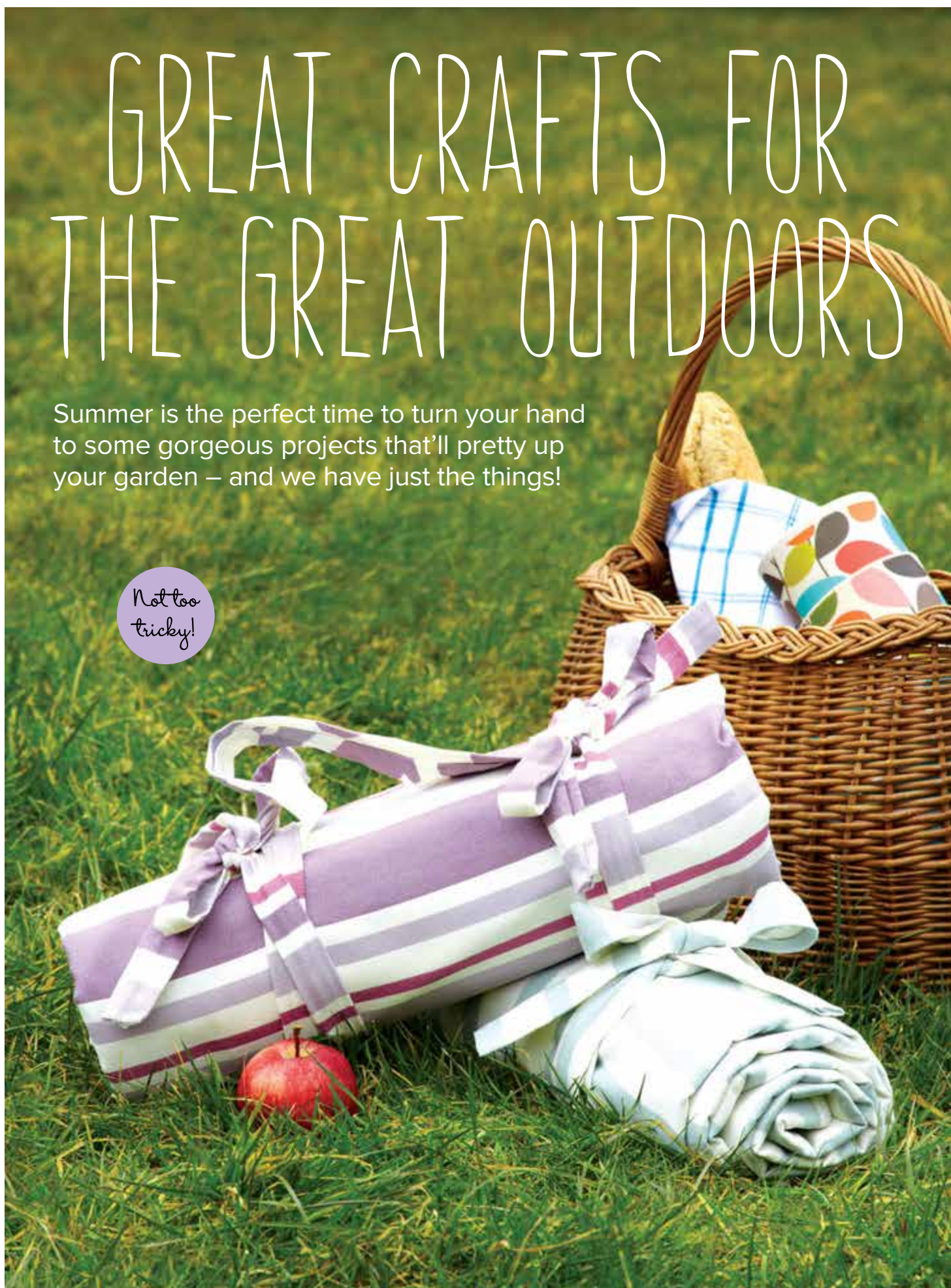


‘It’s so easy
to transform
your jeans
into a new
skirt – and it
looks fab!’

GREAT CRAFTS FOR THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Summer is the perfect time to turn your hand to some gorgeous projects that'll pretty up your garden – and we have just the things!

Not too
tricky!



IT'S PICNIC TIME

The sun's out, so there's no better time to head out for a picnic! A roll-up blanket is just what you need for a lazy afternoon.

YOU WILL NEED

- Scissors
- Two fabrics
- Pins
- Sewing machine
- Threads
- Iron
- Needle
- Safety pin

TO MAKE

1 Start by cutting the pieces of fabrics to the same size. We used 2mx2.5m. Place the fabrics right sides together, pin and then machine-stitch around the outside

edge leaving a gap at one end. Snip off the corners then turn the right way around.

2 Iron the seams flat, then hand-sew the gap closed.

3 To make the handle, cut three strips of fabric (one measuring 30cmx8cm and two of 120cmx8cm). Fold each piece in half lengthways, right sides facing, then sew along the long length. Turn through using a large safety pin, then iron flat. Create an 'H' shape with the handle in-between the

two ties and sew together. Neaten the edges of the ties.

4 Roll up the blanket and tie the handle on to each end.

Fabrics, £14 per m, Clarke & Clarke

Try this

Use a heavyweight cotton that will last for years to come. Wash well at the end of each summer.

SHINE A LIGHT

These lanterns will look lovely in the evening. Fill with citronella candles for a bug-free barbecue.

YOU WILL NEED

- Empty tin cans
- Tea towel
- Nails
- Large nail hammer
- Spray paint
- Pliers
- Lengths of wire

TO MAKE

1 For each lantern, fill a can with water all the way to the top, then pop it into the freezer overnight. The ice will make the can solid and prevent it from crumpling when you hammer it with the nails.

2 Remove the can from the freezer and place it on a rolled-up tea towel. Use small nails to create a design on the can, then use larger nails to make the holes bigger.

3 Leave the can outside while the ice melts. Dry, then spray it a pretty colour.

4 Use pliers to twist the middle of the wire into a heart shape.

Thread the ends of the wire through holes either side of the can. Use pliers to bend the ends of the wire up, so the handle can't fall out.

5 Hang your lantern from a tree or place on display in the garden.

Super spray paint, £6.95 for 400ml, Plasti-kote

Easy make



Try this

Draw your design on paper and tape to the can before hammering the nails so you get an even pattern.

Get making!



Not too tricky!

Try this
To make a smaller
peg bag, cut
down a hanger
or use a child's
hanger.

You can trace over these
designs, if you like



ON THE LINE

Nothing beats washing dried in the fresh air – make the chore more fun with this cute peg bag.

YOU WILL NEED

- Pencil
- Fabrics in two contrasting prints
- Hanger
- Scissors
- Pins
- Sewing machine
- Thread
- Iron
- Double-sided interfacing
- Fabric for clothes
- Ribbon

TO MAKE

1 Make a pattern by drawing around the top of a hanger on a piece of paper, then measuring down 20cm, with a seam allowance (see diagram). Use this pattern to cut out two fronts and one back from the printed fabric. Cut out a shaped hole on the two front pieces; pin the pieces together, right sides facing. Sew around the opening. Make small snips from the hole to the sewn line, remove pins and turn the front piece through so it's the right way around. Iron.

2 Draw the washing line across the front of the bag in pencil, then sew along the line in a dark thread. You may need to repeat this a couple of times so it really shows up.

3 Draw the clothes on to the paper side of the interfacing (see diagram). Cut around each item leaving space from the outline and iron on to different pieces of fabric. Cut out the clothes around the outline neatly, then remove the paper backing and iron into place on the front of the bag a little way below the washing line. Repeat for each item of clothing.

4 Use a small running stitch to sew an outline around each garment, then use a beige thread to sew 'pegs' on to each piece of clothing, ensuring you cover the washing line a little at the same time.

5 Lay the back piece of the bag over the front piece with right sides facing. Check the shape at the top of the bag matches the shape of your hanger. Pin all around the outside of the bag and sew around the edge from the top, leaving a small gap for the hanger to come through. remove pins, turn through to the right side then iron. Place the hanger and pegs inside. Tie a ribbon around the hanger.

Fabrics, £6 for a fat quarter, Hobbycraft.
Ribbon, 90p per m, Jane Means. Basket,
£9.99, The Range



Try this

If you can keep the seam allowance the same when sewing the pieces together, it'll all line up neatly.

PLEASE BE SEATED

These fabulous pads will brighten up any garden furniture and are so comfy when dining outdoors.

YOU WILL NEED

- Scissors
- A selection of bright fabrics
- Pins
- Sewing machine
- Thread
- Iron
- Wadding
- Ribbons



Easy
make

TO MAKE

- 1 Cut out 12 patchwork rectangles, measuring 10cmx14cm, for the top of each seat pad, and a solid piece of fabric for the backing, measuring 40cmx40cm.
- 2 Lay out your chosen design then pin and machine-sew the rectangles together in strips of three. Iron the joins flat from the back and continue until you have four strips of three. Sew these together to create the top piece, ironing the hems as you go.
- 3 To make the seat pad, lay the top and back pieces of fabric together, right sides facing. Pin, sew around the front and sides, remove pins, turn the right way around and iron.
- 4 Cut out two or three pieces of wadding 40cmx40cm and place inside the seat pad. Cut two pieces of ribbon, each 60cm long, and pin on to the back corners. Pin the back of the seat pad closed then sew along the edge and remove the pins.
- 5 Place a pin at each join in the patchwork on the front of the seat pad then hand-sew from the top through to the bottom pulling tight when you knot from behind. This will create the quilted look. Tie on to your chair.

Fabrics, £6 for a fat quarter, Hobbycraft.
Ribbons, 90p per m, Jane Means

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TURN THE PAGE FOR FULL INSTRUCTIONS 

DIAMOND DETAIL VEST

This cute knitted vest has lovely detailing around the edging, too.

MEASUREMENTS

To fit bust 81-86(92-97)cm. Finished measurements: Bust 98(106)cm; Length (including lower edging) 45(46)cm.

MATERIALS

8(9) 100g balls of Stylecraft Classique Cotton DK in White 3660.
Pair each of 3.25mm, 3.75mm and 4mm knitting needles.

TENSION

22 sts and 28 rows over st-st and 18.5 sts and 28 rows over patt, both to 10cm square using 4mm needles.

ABBREVIATIONS

beg beginning; **cm** centimetres; **cont** continue; **dec** decrease; **foll** following; **inc** increase; **k** knit; **p** purl; **patt** pattern; **rem** remaining; **rep** repeat; **RS** right side; **s2togkpo** slip 2tog knitwise, k1, pass slipped sts over; **st(s)** stitch(es); **st-st** stocking stitch; **tbl** through back loop; **tog** together; **yf** yarn forward; **WS** wrong side.

BACK AND FRONT (both alike)

With 3.75mm needles, cast on 93(101) sts. **1st and every foll WS row** P to end. **2nd row** (RS) K3(7), * yf, s2togkpo, yf, k11; rep from *, ending last rep k3(7). **4th row** K2(6), * k2tog, yf, k1, yf, k2tog tbl, k9; rep from *, ending last rep k2(6). **6th row** K1(5), * k2tog, yf, k3, yf, k2tog tbl, k7; rep from *, ending last rep k1(5). **8th row** K7(k4, k2tog, yf, k5), * yf, k2tog tbl, k5, k2tog, yf, k5; rep from *, ending last rep k7(yf, k2tog tbl, k4). **10th row** K8(k3, k2tog, yf, k7), [yf, k2tog tbl, k3, k2tog, yf, k7] 6 times, k1(yf, k2tog tbl, k3). **12th row** K9(k2, k2tog, yf, k9), [yf, k2tog tbl, k1, k2tog, yf, k9] to last 0(4) sts, 0(yf, k2tog tbl, k2). Change to 4mm needles. **14th row** K10(k1, k2tog, yf, k11), * yf, s2togkpo, yf, k11; rep from *, ending last rep k10(yf, k2tog tbl, k1). **16th row** K9(k2, yf, k2tog tbl, k9), [k2tog, yf, k1, yf, k2tog tbl, k9] to last 0(4) sts, 0(k2tog, yf, k2). **18th row** K8(k3, yf, k2tog tbl, k7), [k2tog, yf, k3, yf, k2tog tbl, k7] 6 times, k1(k2tog, yf, k3). **20th row** K7(k4, yf, k2tog tbl, k5), [k2tog, yf, k5, yf, k2tog tbl, k5] 6 times, k2(k2tog, yf, k4). **22nd row** K1(5), * yf, k2tog tbl, k3, k2tog, yf,



k7; rep from *, ending last rep k1(5).

24th row K2(6), * yf, k2tog tbl, k1, k2tog, yf, k9; rep from *, ending last rep k2(6).

These 24 rows **form** the patt. Using 4mm needles only, rep 1st to 24th rows once more then 1st to 23rd rows again. 71 rows.

Shape armholes

Keeping patt correct throughout, work shaping as follows: **Next 2 rows** cast off 2(4) sts, patt to last 2 sts, work 2tog. Dec 1 st at each end of next 1(3) rows, 1 st at each end of foll 2 RS rows, then 1 st at each end of 4 foll 4th rows. 73 sts.

Work 5 rows. 99(101) rows.

Shape neck

Next row (RS) Keeping patt correct throughout, dec 1 st, patt 13, turn and cont on these sts only, leave rem sts on a spare needle. Patt 5 rows. **Next row** Dec 1 st, patt to end. 13 sts. Cont straight in patt for a further 19(21) rows. Cast off. With RS facing, slip 43 sts at centre front on to a holder, rejoin yarn to rem 15 sts, patt to last 2 sts, k2tog. Patt 5 rows. Dec 1 st at armhole edge on next row. 13 sts. Cont straight in patt for a further 19(21) rows. Cast off.

NECK EDGING

Join right shoulder seam. With RS facing and 3.25mm needles, pick up and k19(21)

sts down left front neck, k across 43 sts at centre front, pick up and k19(21) sts up right front neck, 19(21) sts down right back neck, k across 43 sts at centre back, then pick up and k19(21) sts up left back neck. 162(170) sts. **1st row** (WS) * K16(18), k2tog, k1, k2tog, k39, k2tog, k1, k2tog, k16(18); rep from * once more. 154(162) sts. K 1 row. Cast off knitwise on WS.

ARMHOLE EDGING

Join left shoulder and neck edging seam. With RS facing and 3.25mm needles, pick up and k90(93) sts evenly around armhole edge. K 1 row. Cast off knitwise on WS.

LOWER EDGING

Join side and armhole edging seams. With 3.75mm needles, cast on 6 sts. **1st row** (RS) K2, yf, k2tog, yf, k2. 7 sts. **2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th rows** K to end. **3rd row** K3, yf, k2tog, yf, k2. 8 sts. **5th row** K4, yf, k2tog, yf, k2. 9 sts. **7th row** K5, yf, k2tog, yf, k2. 10 sts. **9th row** K6, yf, k2tog, yf, k2. 11 sts. **10th row** Cast off 5, k to end. 6 sts. These 6 rows **form** the edging patt and are repeated. Cont in patt until unshaped edge fits along lower edge of top. Slip stitch edging in place and join cast on edge to cast off edge.

Get making!

prima
exclusive

COOL JUMPER

Even in the summer, you might want to cover up – this gorgeous crochet sweater is ideal!

TURN THE PAGE FOR FULL INSTRUCTIONS



Get making!

CROCHET EYELET SWEATER

With its chic retro styling, this crochet sweater is just what you need for a glam summer look!

MEASUREMENTS

To fit bust 81-86(92-97)cm.
Finished measurements: Bust 96(106)cm; Length to shoulder 54(58)cm; Sleeve seam 28(30)cm.

MATERIALS

4(5) 100g balls of Sirdar Cotton
4 ply in Mill White 501.
3.5mm crochet hook.

TENSION

23 sts and 19 rows to 10cm
square over patt using
3.5mm hook.

ABBREVIATIONS

beg beginning; **ch** chain; **cm** centimetres; **cont** continue; **dec** decrease; **dc** double crochet; **fol** following; **inc** increase; **patt** pattern; **rep** repeat; **sp** space; **st(s)** stitch(es); **tr** treble.

BACK AND FRONT

(both alike)

With 3.5mm hook, make 112(124)ch.

Foundation row 1dc in 2nd ch from hook, 1 dc in each ch to end, turn. 111(123) sts.

1st row 3ch (stands as 1tr), 1tr in each of next 2dc, * 1ch, miss 1dc, 1tr in each of next 3dc; rep from * to end, turn.

2nd row 1ch, 1dc in each tr and sp to end, turn.

3rd row 4ch (stands as 1tr, 1ch), miss first dc, * 1tr in each of next 3dc, 1ch, miss 1dc; rep from * to last st, 1tr in last dc, turn.

4th row 1ch, 1dc in each tr and sp to turning ch, 1dc in sp, 1dc in 3rd ch of turning chain, turn.

These 4 rows **form** the patt and are repeated. Cont in patt until work measures 54(58)cm from beg, ending with a 1st or 3rd patt row. Fasten off.

Use your skills



SLEEVES

With 3.5mm hook, make 60(64)ch.

Foundation row 1dc in 2nd ch from hook, 1 dc in each ch to end, turn. 59(63) sts.

1st row 3ch, 1tr in next dc, * 1ch, miss 1dc, 1tr in each of next 3dc; rep from *, ending last rep 1tr in each of next 2dc, turn.

Cont in 4-row patt as now set and work 2 rows.

Shape sleeves

Inc 1 st at each end next row and every foll 4th row until there are 83(87) sts, taking

inc sts into patt. Cont straight until sleeve measures 28(30)cm from beg, ending with a 2nd or 4th patt row. Fasten off.

TO MAKE UP

Join top edge of back and front together for 8(9)cm from each end, leaving centre section open for neck (shoulder measurements are adjustable to suit). With centre of sleeve top to shoulder seam, sew on sleeves. Join side and sleeve seams.

FLOWER POWER

I think paper flowers are some of the easiest and loveliest things to make and TV interiors queen Linda Barker thinks so, too! She's putting her love of crafting to good use by supporting kids' charity World Vision and its Floral Friday campaign – the aim is to make or wear something floral on 10 July to show support for the world's poorest children. Text FLORAL to 70060 to donate £5, and visit worldvision.org.uk/floralfriday to find Linda's tips for origami flowers.



Linda on a recent trip to Cambodia, teaching local children paper crafting

Get creative with Prima's deputy editor Sue McNeill



MAKE A NOTE OF IT

I like nothing better than opening the page to start a fresh notebook and this new range caught my eye. Jot down your recipes or your crafty ideas in one of these stylish notepads. They come in four striking designs – why not buy the whole set? £4.95 each, Ohh Deer.



VINTAGE QUEEN

Regular readers of Prima will already be familiar with our customising queen Lisa Comfort's stylish sewing. Her new book, *Sew Over It Vintage* (Ebury Press, £15, from 18 June), has 30 inspiring projects for your home and wardrobe. It's easy to follow and comes with fab photography.

Sew it, make it, love it!

MEAN MACHINE

Aimed at keen card makers, this four-in-one machine is called Todo, which is Spanish for 'everything'. And it really delivers on the promise as it embosses, die-cuts, letter presses and hot foils. It's easy to use and you don't need a printer as well. For more about Todo, visit createandcraft.tv/everything.



ALL THAT GLITTERS

These gold-dipped feathers are so pretty and they're versatile, too. They make a special decoration for weddings and summer parties. Tie around napkins or tuck into ribbon to make your wrapping look luxurious. £3.99 for a pack of 10 (each feather is 12cm), Pipii.



IT'S A SNIP!

You could give these as a gift but if I were you, I'd treat myself! In contrasting gold and black, these two pairs of scissors not only look good but are extremely useful for your crafts or in your kitchen. £25 for two pairs, Papermash.



• Your time off & time out

THIS MONTH'S BEST TV, FILMS, LIVE SHOWS AND MORE

An evening out at the movies



Sir Ian McKellen in *Mr Holmes* with Hattie Morahan, who plays a mysterious woman from Holmes's past

MR HOLMES

Sherlock Holmes (Sir Ian McKellen) has retired to a remote seaside farmhouse, where he plans to end his days tending bees, with only the company of his housekeeper (Laura Linney) and her young son. Holmes's once brilliant mind may be failing, but the case that forced him out of business still haunts him and demands to be solved. **Out 19 June**

JURASSIC WORLD

Twenty-two years after Spielberg terrified us with his tale of giant prehistoric predators running amok in a Jurassic theme park, a new director (Colin Trevorrow) picks up the story. Ticket sales at Isla Nublar are declining, so a new hybrid dinosaur is created and, before long, it's destroying everything in its path. Plot-wise, we have been here before, but if you're after a great cast, spectacular special effects and a movie roller-coaster ride, this film is for you. **Out 11 June**

MAGIC MIKE XXL

Three years after he retired from the business, Mike (Channing Tatum) reunites with his former team of male strippers, the Kings of Tampa, for one final blow-out performance. If the first *Magic Mike* film is anything to go by, expect comedy, drama, romance and lots of well-oiled, rippling pecs appeal from the band of strippers. It makes you blush to think what the XXL could refer to – but, by the end, of course, all should be revealed. **Out 3 July**

AMY

Even in death, the talented but doomed singer Amy Winehouse is still making headlines. This 'warts and all' biopic – from the makers of award-winning documentary *Senna* – started out with the Winehouse estate's approval. The family has since washed their hands of it, claiming it makes some ungrounded accusations. Amy's turbulent rise to the top, troubled relationship with fame and tragic death at 27 make for powerful viewing. **Out 3 July**

Live shows & events



JIMMY'S SAUSAGE & BEER FESTIVAL

TV presenter Jimmy Doherty's annual shindig at Wherstead, near Ipswich, is set on a 170-acre farm and features live music, kids' entertainment and cookery demos

from top chefs, including Gennaro Contaldo and *The Great British Bake Off* finalist Richard Burr. 25 and 26 July; jimmysfarm.com/events



DAWN FRENCH: 30 MILLION MINUTES TOUR

This solo show is coming to the West End's Vaudeville Theatre later this year for four weeks only. Based on Dawn's life, it has jokes about weight,

willpower and the joys of being female. Book now before it sells out! *From 11 November to 5 December 2015; dawnfrenchontour.com*



HARRY ENFIELD & PAUL WHITEHOUSE... LEGENDS! LIVE TOUR

If you're still in the mood for laughter, then book your seats now for an audience with the two comedy 'legends'. After 25 years of working

together, this is the first time they've taken their show to the stage. *Nationwide from 24 October. For tickets, go to ticketmaster.co.uk*



Lucky lotto winners in BBC One's *The Syndicate*

What's on TV

THE SYNDICATE BBC ONE

Writer Kay Mellor's drama about lottery winners returns for a third series. This time, a syndicate of servants working for the owners of a country pile that's going to ruin wins the money. The cast includes Lenny Henry as Godfrey, the gardener who has Asperger's and, he believes, a system to crack the winning code. With Elizabeth Berrington as the housekeeper and Anthony Andrews as Lord Hazelwood. A modern-day *Downton Abbey*.

HUMANS CHANNEL 4

Ever wish you had a robot to do the housework for you? This eight-part drama revolves around Synths, robotic servants that look human but are wired-up from within. Katherine Parkinson stars as a working mum who gets more than she bargained for when her husband Joe (Tom Goodman-Hill) brings home the beautiful Synth, Anita (Gemma Chan). Be careful what you wish for.



Gemma Chan in *Humans*

THE INTERCEPTOR BBC ONE

This gripping, high-octane, eight-part series is all about a top-secret law enforcement team whose mission is to hunt down Britain's most ruthless criminals. The show has a great cast, including well-established talent Trevor Eve and Jo Joyner from *EastEnders*. Look out for OT Fagbenle in the lead role, who's set to become a huge star.

WIMBLEDON BBC

Bring out the strawberries and cream – it's that time of year again! You can follow all the drama across the BBC on TV, radio and online as Andy Murray battles it out in an attempt to be crowned Men's Champion for a second time. Sue Barker (left) leads the coverage, while Clare Balding presents a new highlights show on BBC Two. From 29 June to 12 July.



AN EARLY MORNING COFFEE WITH

Eamonn Holmes

As well as Sky TV's *Sunrise* programme, Eamonn also hosts *This Morning* with his wife Ruth Langsford every Friday. The couple married five years ago and have a son, Jack, 13



Do you look forward to the summer stint at *This Morning* with Ruth?

It's good and bad news. It means Ruth and I haven't been able to have a summer holiday with Jack for the past seven years. But at the same time, it's a fantastic opportunity to work on a great show with the person I love and respect most in the world. So, it's an amazing gift.

What are the on-screen benefits of working with the missus?

There's a kind of telepathy between us, where each of us knows where the other is going. We have an ease, too, that tends to make guests feel comfortable. It's as if they've been invited into our living room for a little chat. Amusingly, sometimes we forget to tell American guests that we're married and they can look quite alarmed when I say something like, 'Well, that's not what you said in bed last night, Ruth!'

Is it true that you're the romantic in the relationship?

Yes. Ruth isn't cuddly or soppy at all and doesn't do padded cards or boxes of chocolates. I'd probably like a bit more of that kind of thing, but I think we both understand how lucky we are to have the relationship that we do.

We just express our love differently.

You're a devoted son to your mum.

How important is that relationship?

Very. And I do go back to see her in Belfast as often as I possibly can because, at 87, she needs a lot of support

and care. I'm one of five sons and all of us adore and worry about her. Ripe old age can be incredibly harsh.

You describe your mother as a strong woman. Are you attracted to women who share that strength?

Definitely. I feel she's behind the fact that I've always been surrounded by strong women – including Ruth, of course. And my agent is a female you wouldn't want to mess with!

With three children already from your first marriage, did you worry about having another with Ruth?

No, because if you love someone with your heart and soul, as I love Ruth, then for me, the natural result of that love is for you to have a child together. I think I'm the luckiest man alive to be with Ruth and to be physically close to her. Jack is the product of the love we have for each other, and I didn't worry about it at all.

Your dog Maggie is also part of your family. Tell us about her...

Oh my god, we are devoted to that dog and would be devastated if anything happened to her. She's a cross between a Border collie and a Sausage dog (I know this because we had her DNA tested to find out!). She was a rescue dog and we see

her as another person in our family. I'm not kidding, she is so dear to us. Honestly, if Ruth loved me half as much as that dog, I'd be a happy man! Eamonn and Ruth will host ITV's *This Morning Summer* each weekday at 10.30am from 20 July; itv.com/thismorning



Eamonn and Ruth with their son Jack

Happy reading!

Curl up with a good book



Books editor Cathy Rentzenbrink picks this month's best new novels

Six cracking reads



IF YOU GO AWAY by Adele Parks

(Headline, £16.99)

After war breaks out on Vivian's wedding day in

1914, she is left alone to run her husband's estate. She's bored and lonely, until a playwright turned conscientious objector comes to work on the farm. **Out now**



THE LAST HONEYTRAP by Louise Lee

(Headline, £7.99)

Florence Love is a private investigator

with a murky past who must find out if a famous musician is the faithful type. Will she be able to resist falling for him? A fascinating insight into the world of detection. **Out now**



THE OTHER CHILD by Lucy Atkins

(Quercus, £7.99)

When Tess is sent to photograph American surgeon Greg, the

attraction is immediate. Just a few months later, she is pregnant and moves to Boston to be with him, but then she unearths a secret... **Out now**



IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT by Judy Blume

(Picador, £16.99)

We may have grown up reading Judy

Blume, but her new book is one for adults. In a year, three planes crash over a New Jersey town and the residents feel under threat. **Out now**



THE CAKE SHOP IN THE GARDEN by Carole Matthews

(Sphere, £7.99)

Fay sells delicious cakes from her

beautiful garden and looks after her mother. She is far too busy for romance, but then Danny Wilde walks into her life and nothing will be the same again. **Out now**



THE VERSIONS OF US by Laura Barnett

(W&N, £12.99)

From the moment Eva and Jim first meet,

time splits and their lives play out in three different versions. All the highs and lows of love are portrayed in this thought-provoking and moving read. **Out now**



5 QUESTIONS WE ASKED... ADELE PARKS

Did you always want to be a writer?

As soon as I made the connection between the glorious book I was holding in my hand and the fact someone had written it, I was sure that I wanted to be a writer. The book was *The Magic Faraway Tree* and I was about four. Soon after that, I started to write stories about fairies. My granddad paid me 10p for an illustrated copy!

What would you say are the best and worst things about the life of a writer?

It's an awesome feeling to think that something I have created might interest, entertain or amuse someone else. It's validating to think I'm making a connection with hundreds of thousands of people all over the globe. The worst thing is that I never feel I've finished.

Who or what inspires you?

Kindness inspires me, as does self-sacrifice, courage and independent thought. The world is full of brilliant human beings, but bad luck and violence make the newspapers. I like to fill my books with everyday acts of wonderfulness.

Can you tell us about your daily routine?

I write at least 1,000 words a day, five days a week. I also research, read and aim to promote the charities I'm interested in, such as The Reading Agency and Alzheimer's Society. And I try to swim or walk to loosen up my back!

What advice would you give to someone who wants to start writing?

Try to write something every day, even if it's just for 10 minutes and you're not in the mood. And read a lot because that's essential for all writers.

Join Prima's online book club!



Come on bookworms, join the club! You could be one of 75 lucky readers to review a novel each month and share your thoughts. Sign up to be in with the chance of winning this month's book, *The Seven Sisters* by Lucinda Riley – and you get 40% off all Pan Macmillan books, too. What are you waiting for?

prima.co.uk/bookclub



Take 5... boutique hotel escapes

Lift your spirits with a UK weekend away. These sexy hotels are big on style and spoiling you rotten!

The Pig near Bath, Somerset

If country romps and rustic chic are what you're looking for, you will fall in love with The Pig, near Bath. This golden-stone Georgian pile gives a country house weekend away a fresh edge and sense of humour, with papier-mâché stags' heads and massage huts set amid the walled kitchen garden. Food rules the roost here and everything served in the conservatory style restaurant is absolutely delicious.

● **BEST FEATURE:** The Pig sources 90% of its ingredients from within a 25-mile radius. Don't miss the pork crackling batons!

● **THE BILL:** Doubles from £139; thepighotel.com.



Battlesteads, Northumberland



Stay at Battlesteads in Wark, near Hexham, and you'll be stargazing before you know it. This is the only UK hotel with its own observatory, and handily, it sits on the edge of the Northumberland National Park, the largest Dark Sky Park in Europe. There's also a smart pub with an interesting choice of organic wines and cask ales.

● **BEST FEATURE:** Guests staying in one of the hotel's new eco-lodges can use the observatory through the night.

● **THE BILL:** Doubles from £115; eco-lodges from £165, both with breakfast; battlesteads.com.

The George in Rye, East Sussex



This former coaching inn on Rye's pretty Victorian high street is the real deal when it comes to one-off boutique gems. There's a buzz about this cosy yet chic den with its 34 individually designed rooms and a sophisticated restaurant. It comes as no surprise interiors are by a former stage set designer.

● **BEST FEATURE:** Room 32 as this is where George Clooney stayed while filming *The Monuments Men*!

● **THE BILL:** Queen rooms from £135, with breakfast; thegeorgeinrye.com.

Hotel du Vin, Bristol



Ingeniously housed in an old sugar mill, this was one of the originals in what has now become a chain of hotels – and it remains one of the best. Its wine theme runs throughout as rooms are all named after a tippable and feature huge beds, monsoon showers and Miller Harris toiletries. And the cosy bar and restaurant's décor continues the grape theme, too.

● **BEST FEATURE:** The summer al fresco menu offers three courses, including a glass of Pinot, for £20.95.

● **THE BILL:** Doubles from £129 per night; hotelduvin.com.

Bel & The Dragon, Churt, Surrey



In this 19th-century coaching inn, between Farnham and Haslemere, all 14 bedrooms are named after Jane Austen characters, as the author lived locally. The rooms are cheerful and indulgent with winged armchairs, tartan throws and linen by The White Company. Outside the hotel, you'll find the gorgeous Surrey Hills and nearby is the Devil's Punch Bowl, situated in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

● **BEST FEATURE:** Impressive and creative cocktail menu.

● **THE BILL:** Doubles from £115; belandthedragon.co.uk.



SAVVY WAYS TO dream destinations

Take a bite of the Big Apple

New York may very well be on your bucket list and it's an easy one to crack on a budget if you have some insider know-how. Shop around for flights as this year there are an additional 135 per week from the UK, such as Norwegian's new low-cost flights from London Gatwick (norwegian.com). Also, consider flying from regional airports such as Manchester, which has a new Thomas Cook Airlines flight (thomascookairlines.com).

Sunday night is the cheapest night of the week for hotels in NYC, so staying Friday to Tuesday is a smart move. And the best hotel rates are January to March or July to August. Good value places to stay include boutique hotel the Sohotel on The Bowery (thesohotel.com), stylish Hotel Le Bleu in Brooklyn (hotellebleu.com) or head out to Queens College in the Flushing area of Queens for a university room for under £50 per night in summer (universityrooms.com).

Luckily, New York is a city packed with free sights. Enjoy great views of Lower Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty from the free Staten Island Ferry, pick up tips from a local via the free Big Apple Greeter service, visit museums during the times of the week that they're free and wander Times Square, Central Park, New York Public Library, Grand Central Terminal and Brooklyn Bridge. During the summer, you can make the most of the free concerts, performances and outdoor art, including Socrates Sculpture Park

With a little bit of insider know-how, you could be drinking in the Manhattan skyline without breaking the bank

Bucket list bursting but bank balance not? Don't despair – with some insider tips, the world's most sought after destinations are within your grasp

(socratessculpturepark.org) and Shakespeare in the Park (publictheater.org). You can even go kayaking for free on the Hudson River with the Manhattan Community Boathouse (manhattancommunityboathouse.org). For discounted dining deals, book a top table during Summer Restaurant Week (nycgo.com/restaurant-week), or eat from trendy food trucks and outdoor markets selling good food at great prices.

● For more information on free deals, visit nycgo.com/free

Relax on a beach in the Caribbean

The secret to value-for-money Caribbean holidays is to go with a tried-and-tested tour operator that can source the best deals. Virgin Holidays is a safe bet, especially when you go all-inclusive. Family holidays to Savannah Beach Hotel in Barbados include free drama courses for kids with the Pauline Quirke Academy, giving you time for the spa! Seven nights all-inclusive starts at £1,315 per adult and £635 per child with flights.

● Call 0844 557 3859; virginholidays.co.uk

Upmarket specialist Caribtours has recently set up sister company C by Caribtours, offering lower cost holidays. Seven nights room only at the Blue Horizons Garden Resort in Grenada costs from £985 per person. Blue Horizon is a savvy option as it's just across the road from Grand Anse Beach, which is the most beautiful beach on the island.

● Call 020 7751 9155; cbcaribtours.co.uk



Enjoy the laid-back atmosphere of the Caribbean

Set sail on a dream cruise

Taking a cruise used to be the privilege of the wealthy, but the industry has boomed and now cruising can be a value-for-money holiday with meals and entertainment included. The old adage of shopping around is the best advice – try specialist cruise travel agents such as Iglu, Cruise.co.uk, Bolsover Cruise Club, Thomas Cook and Vision Cruise. There are always deals, particularly when brochures are launched for the following season. Cruise lines are keen to secure early bookings and will offer incentives such as on-board spending money, free flights to join cruises in the Mediterranean, cabin upgrades and free car parking at UK ports. Last-minute deals are also available if you're flexible with your dates and type of cabin. Inside cabins with no windows are the cheapest.

Another good value option is to take a cruise-and-stay package, combining a week-long cruise with a land-based beach break, so you get the best of both.

For instance, Thomson Cruises offers a 14-night cruise-and-stay holiday – enjoy seven nights full-board on its Highlights of the Mediterranean cruise, followed by seven nights half-board at the Thomson Platinum Protur Alicia Hotel in Majorca. Prices from £1,389 per person with flights, transfers, port taxes, tips and service charges.

● Call 0871 230 2800 or visit thomson.co.uk/cruise



Enjoy Canada's
amazing scenery
with the freedom
of a motorhome



Explore Canada's great outdoors

The dramatic, big sky provinces of Canada are a dream destination for lovers of wildlife and the outdoors, but travelling there can be pricey. The most economical way to visit is to fly to the east coast province of Quebec (just a six-hour flight to Montreal from the UK) and pick up a recreational vehicle or motorhome. If you're a party of four, a 25-foot model is big enough, although one of you needs to be a confident driver. An RV trip is essentially a glamping trip, as Quebec is littered with superb campsites hooking you up to water and electricity.

Once you're out of the city, the roads are easy and spectacular. Take the route north along the mighty St Lawrence River for fairy-tale Quebec City and on to the magical Île d'Orléans, an island with manicured clapboard houses, strawberry fields and smart campsites with RV pitches right on the waterfront. Continue north to Baie-Sainte-Catherine for impressive whale watching and inland along the Saguenay Fjord to Ferme 5 Etoiles for bear spotting. Then drive south into Parc Aventures Cap Jaseux for kayaking and Parc National de la Jacques-Cartier for white-water rafting.

Breakfasts are often big in Canada so when you're on the road, splash the cash at breakfast and then do lunch and dinner from market stalls and supermarkets. The savviest times to visit are late May, early June and September when the weather is good, most attractions are open and accessible, the roads are quieter and the prices for renting a motorhome are usually at their lowest, providing you book in advance. Families restricted to school summer holidays should note that it's cheaper to rent

a motorhome in August than July.

- A 13-day Montreal round trip, including two nights room only at the four-star Hotel Delta Montréal, and 10-day hire of a MH-A Maxi Motorhome costs from £1,469 per person, including flights. Call 0845 543 6615 or visit travelbag.co.uk.

- For more information on travelling around Canada, visit keepexploring.ca



Join the party in Rio

Planning a trip to the grand spectacle that is the annual Rio Carnival?

Unfortunately, it's also the most expensive time to visit Brazil's party capital. Hotels and airlines always increase their prices to take advantage of the huge demand. But listen up: there's a savvy way to enjoy the same carnival experience.

You may not realise that the Carnival parades are actually a competition, where the different samba schools in Rio compete to be crowned that year's champions. One week after the 'main' Carnival, the winning schools strut their stuff in the Sambadrome one last time: the same bands, the same dancers, the same crowds. But crucially not the same prices. Even though Brazilians will tell you that they actually prefer the



Relax on the beautiful
island of Mauritius





atmosphere of the Winners' Parade, it just doesn't have the same international recognition, so flights and hotels all revert back to more or less their normal rates.

South America specialist RealWorld has seven-day packages including the Winners Parade from £1,250 per person, with all accommodation, tickets, international flights and transfers – roughly half what you would pay during the Carnival dates.

● 0113 262 5329; realworldholidays.co.uk



Party with the locals at the annual Winners' Parade

‘Listen up: there’s a savvy way to enjoy the same carnival experience’

Get washed up in the Indian Ocean

Of the exclusive Indian Ocean islands, Mauritius is the most affordable due to its wide range of hotels. June is low season and the best month to get value for money. Travel to the north of the island and temperatures still reach 26°C while rainfall is low.

The trick is to avoid the flashier hotels in favour of smaller options. The pretty Veranda Paul & Virginie lies on the north-eastern tip of Mauritius at the heart

of the fishing village of Grand Gaube and costs from £75 per night with breakfast (veranda-resorts.com). Or there's Merville Beach, an authentic beach resort run by Lux Resorts, on the north coast at lively Grand Baie. Rooms and bungalows feature traditional bamboo thatched roofs and cost from around £86 per room all-inclusive. There's also a fab spa (mervillebeach.com).
● Flights with Air Mauritius cost from £600 per person in June; airmauritius.com

Served in 1939 Blind in 2012 Supported today

My father – Jim Hooper, Glider Pilot Regiment



My father has never been one to make a fuss. It's one reason why he doesn't say much about his time as a prisoner of war. It's why he hardly talks about being blind. And why I'm so thankful he's supported by Blind Veterans UK.

I can't imagine what went through the minds of those young men as they fearlessly dropped out of the sky, as bullets fell like rain, in Arnhem, in September 1944. Or their terror as they were seized as prisoners of war. And I won't ever know the resolve that kept them walking at gunpoint, for four weeks, without food, in the arctic conditions of one of the coldest winters ever known to man. But my father can. **As a glider pilot serving in World War II, he lived through it all.**

Not that you would know it of course. Like so many of our parents' generation, my father just wanted to get on with life after the war.

I think that's what he found so upsetting about going blind. He couldn't get on with things in the same way. He was **diagnosed with age-related macular degeneration when he was 80**. Ten years later he was registered blind. He couldn't drive and, for the first time in his life, he had to rely on others. Now that, he found tough.

I didn't know Blind Veterans UK could help him. I just thought they were there to help those blinded in conflict. I was wrong. They'll help anyone who has any kind of Service record, including National Service. **People like my father. Perhaps like yours.**

He was assigned a welfare officer who pretty much changed his life. He's been given a computer and the skills to use the internet. He's got a talking clock to make things easier. And he gets out and about with other veterans. Above all, he's got his independence back.

My father doesn't like to rely on others, so didn't find it easy to ask for help. But **Blind Veterans UK believes no one who has served our country should battle sight loss alone.** I agree. So if you care about someone who has served and is now losing their sight, or if you need help yourself, **I urge you to get in touch** with them. They've helped my father no end. With that determined spirit of his, he's enjoying life as much as ever.

With best wishes, Maundy, Jim's daughter.

**If you know a veteran with sight loss,
Blind Veterans UK is ready to help.**

Call free on **0800 389 7979** or visit **noonealone.org.uk**



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9 PAGES OF GIVEAWAYS, PUZZLES, OFFERS AND A GREAT SHORT STORY!

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It's so easy to win!

Stylish sunglasses

Get set for summer as 29 lucky readers will each receive two pairs of Mono and Butterfly fashion sunglasses, together worth £35, from Foster Grant's 2015 designer collection. Foster Grant takes its inspiration from the latest celebrity and catwalk trends to provide sunglasses designed for every taste and occasion. There's a great mix of contemporary and classic frames to choose from, with on-trend colours, new patterns, shapes and finishes all reflected

throughout the range. Visit fostergrant.co.uk.

Call 0905 817 2741 (77ppm)*
Text PRIMAWIN2 to 87088** (£1.50)

Write to Prima/
Foster Grant
GVPRAL15112



Summer flip-flops



Gumbies, a UK-based fashion retail website inspired by the Australian way of life, is giving away seven pairs of flip-flops to seven lucky winners. That means you'll have one pair for each day of the week, and each set is worth £140! The new Gumbies Islander unisex flip-flops have a soft cotton canvas layer that allows your feet to breathe, keeping them dry and super cool in hot weather. Choose from a range of fab styles such as Rasta, Nautical, Vintage and Denim. Visit gumbies.co.uk.

Call 0905 817 2743 (77ppm)*

Text PRIMAWIN4 to 87088** (£1.50)

Write to Prima/Gumbies GVPRAL15113

Tickets to Kirstie Allsopp's The Handmade Fair

Property guru and craft queen Kirstie Allsopp returns to host The Handmade Fair at Hampton Court Palace from 18 to 20 September and Prima has 20 pairs of Full Experience tickets to give away! Try your hand at a Skills Workshop of your choice, a Super Theatre session and a Grand Make, plus you'll have access to the boutique shopping village, artisan marketplace and much more! Each pair is worth £64. The craft event, sponsored by Hobbycraft, saw its inaugural fair in 2014 and delivers an unforgettable experience for thousands of keen crafters. For more information, visit thehandmadefair.com.

Call 0905 817 2742 (77ppm)*

Text PRIMAWIN3 to 87088** (£1.50)

Write to Prima/The Handmade Fair
GVPRAL15111



Beauty goodies

Give your face a treat with a Yours Truly Organics skincare set containing a cleanser, toner, serum and face balm, together worth £100 – and we have seven up for grabs! The gel cleanser is enriched with vitamin C and sandalwood oil, to remove impurities, while the balancing toner helps

return your skin to its optimal pH level. There is also an oat kernel enriched repairing serum and a luxurious face balm that acts as a great base for make-up application. Visit yourstrulyorganics.com.

Call 0905 817 2740 (77ppm)*

Text PRIMAWIN1 to 87088**

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HOW TO ENTER: Call the 0905 number, or text PRIMAWIN followed by the number of the giveaway you wish to enter, then a space and your contact details, to 87088 (£1.50), by midnight 31 July 2015. For example: text PRIMAWIN1 Jane Smith, 1 The Cottage, London AB1 2CD. Or, send your name and address on a postcard to: The Data Solutions Centre, Workshop S80 2RT, prefixed by the offer name and code, by 3 August 2015. A separate stamped postcard is needed for each offer. *Calls cost 77p per minute plus network charges and should last no longer than 20 minutes. From 1st July 2015, calls will cost 75p per minute plus your network access charge. **Texts cost £1.50 plus your usual network operator rate. Calls from other networks and mobiles may cost more. Lines close midnight 31 July 2015. If you phone or text your entry after the advertised closing date, you will not be entered but you will be charged. Winners will be selected at random after the closing date. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390. We will use the information you supply to process your competition entry. For our privacy policy, visit hearst.co.uk/dp.



READER SHORT STORY

What's in a name?

Sometimes a loss can bring an unexpected gain

Annie put down her paintbrush and turned to look at the patio door. She could always tell when she was being watched, and today was no exception.

'Come on then, Fluffy,' she said, as a small bundle of fur tiptoed over the threshold and into the lounge.

'So what will it be today? Fish or chicken?'

Deciding fish was the order of the day, Annie sprinkled the munchies on the floor and watched as they were hoovered up. Fluffy looked up expectantly, but rather than giving her more food, Annie tickled her under the chin and stroked her head.

'I think that's more than enough, don't you?'

She was a very pretty tortoiseshell cat with thick dense fur. Annie had no idea of her real name or where she came from, but Fluffy seemed to suit her and these regular visits were a nice distraction for a couple of minutes each day. She had also been a wonderful model for Annie's portfolio. Being a self-employed pet artist had its quiet periods and that's when Annie worked on different techniques and mediums. Fluffy was one of her favourite subjects and she had several completed pictures to show future clients.

'Well that's it,' said Annie. 'I have to get back to work now, so off you go.'

Fluffy knew when to take her leave and she parted with a small meow – possibly a 'thank you', or maybe even a 'see you tomorrow'.

A week later and Fluffy hadn't visited. For the first few days Annie hadn't really thought much of it, accepting that it had been a particularly wet month and cats don't like rain. However, when the sun came back out and there was still no sign, she wondered where she was. Melanie, her best friend, had said, 'I expect she's found someone else to sponge off.' Needless to say, Melanie wasn't a cat lover and couldn't understand the sadness Annie felt. Supposing she was ill or, worse, had been hit by a car? But how could you go asking if someone had a cat that was or wasn't called Fluffy? No, she would just have to wait and hope.

It was the following Tuesday that there was a knock at the door and a man she had never met before greeted her with: 'I've lost... well not lost... but mislaid... sorry, I'm a neighbour... down Rosehill Way... Gavin.'

He extended his hand out as a greeting and smiled down at Annie. (She liked tall men.)

'Hi, I'm Annie. Sorry, did you say you've lost something?'

'Well, yes, my cat. She likes to roam you see. I was just

WIN
£100



wondering if you could keep a lookout or perhaps check your garage as I know she's very nosy.'

'Oh, you don't mean Fluffy, do you?' Annie said with enthusiasm.

'Fluffy? Yes, she could be described as fluffy and mottled, but her name's Cracker.'

Seeing the amused look on Annie's face, he completed the sentence with: 'I got her at Christmas.'

They both laughed.

'Just a moment.'

Annie disappeared into her workshop and a couple of minutes later she appeared with an A4 board.

'Is this her?'

'Oh my goodness,' cried Gavin. 'Well if it isn't her, she must have a twin!'

'I'm a pet artist you see, and I hope you don't mind but Fluffy – I mean Cracker – has been modelling for me.'

'Fantastic,' he grinned. 'I shall, of course, expect an hourly rate. She doesn't come cheap you know!'

'You're welcome to the pictures,' laughed Annie. This was the kind of cold caller she liked.

'Thanks. Actually, could I borrow it for now? It might help me find her. I don't have any photos.'

'Oh, of course. Do you need some help? Only I feel I know her as well.'

And so the door knocking began. It was at number 42 Bridge Street that they struck lucky.

'Oh yes,' said the elderly lady. 'That's Tinker. I thought she was a stray.' The lady looked down at her feet.

'She's really lovely. I never realised how much fun having a cat could be, but of course, you'll be wanting her back now.'

Gavin looked at Annie.

'Actually,' said Gavin, 'when I first got Cracker I was working from home, but I've recently got a job, so now I'm at work all day, and she definitely needs more attention. Perhaps she would be better off with you. If you'd like to keep her that is?'

'Oh yes, I would! Thank you so much, that would be lovely. She's been such a wonderful companion to me.' Her face lit up.

'That was nice of you,' said Annie, as they walked away.

'Well,' said Gavin. 'it's not every day that you lose three cats in one go. But somehow I feel I've gained a whole lot more today!'



DO YOU HAVE A WAY WITH WORDS?

MEET THE AUTHOR

This month's winning author is **Elaine Rush** from Eastleigh, Hampshire, who wins £100! She says: 'I was inspired to write this

when my husband said the cat we were feeding probably had two or three other homes! I'm really pleased to have won.'

For your chance to win, email your entry of 800 words maximum to yourwinningstory@hearst.co.uk or

post to Your Winning Story, Prima Features, 72 Broadwick Street, London W1F 9EP, including your name, address, phone number and a good quality photograph. Please note that, unfortunately, Prima cannot return any photographs or stories.

Go on, explore Europe!

See the stunning sights of Italy and beyond on these exciting eight-day tours

Lake Como, St Moritz & the Bernina Express

Selected departures up to October 2015



Italy's idyllic Lake Como

8 days
half board
from only
£809pp*

On this wonderfully varied tour, you will explore Lake Como, one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. You'll also see some stunning icons of northern Italy and Switzerland: the amazing Lakes of Maggiore and Lugano; the majestic Alps surrounding St Moritz; Bellagio, Italy's most beautiful village, and Bergamo, one of its finest medieval towns. Plus, you'll travel by rail on the fantastic Bernina Express. Described by Wordsworth as 'a treasure the earth keeps to itself' and an inspiration for Verdi and Rossini, this enchanting region will captivate you.

FULLY ESCORTED PRICE INCLUDES:

- Return flights from London Stansted, Manchester, Luton, London Heathrow, London Gatwick, East Midlands, Bristol, Birmingham, Edinburgh or Dublin
- Seven nights half board at hand-picked four-star hotels
- Visit to St Moritz in the heart of the Swiss Alps
- Travel on the stunning Bernina Express, one of the world's most spectacular Alpine railway journeys
- Visit to Lake Maggiore with its Mediterranean ambience and azure waters, spectacularly surrounded by green hills and exotic, colourful flora
- Guided tour of Bergamo, northern Italy's most enchanting medieval town
- Visit to Switzerland's alluring city of Lugano
- Lake cruise to stunning Bellagio, acknowledged as one of Italy's most beautiful villages
- Private visit to the enchanting Villa del Balbianello and its inspirational gardens
- Escorted by our experienced tour manager

Escape to beautiful Sicily

Selected departures up to October 2015



The Temple of Concordia
in Agrigento's Valley
of the Temples

8 days
half board
from only
£939pp*

Sicily – that gorgeous island off the southern-most tip of Italy – is one of the few places in Europe that can genuinely be called unspoilt. It has a beauty that is truly breathtaking, with a spectacularly indented coastline, remarkably uninhabited countryside, and the Mount Etna volcano providing a magnificent backdrop. The Carthaginians, Romans, Moors, Normans, Spanish, French and finally the Italians have conquered it. Their magnificent relics include churches, monasteries and ancient amphitheatres. On this trip, you'll visit Palermo, the vibrant capital of the island; medieval Siracusa, home of Archimedes; historic Agrigento; and Taormina, one of Sicily's most beautiful villages.

FULLY ESCORTED PRICE INCLUDES:

- Return flights to Catania from London Gatwick, Manchester or Dublin
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- Guided tour of Agrigento's Valley of the Temples, one of the world's greatest archaeological sites
- Visit to Palermo, Sicily's capital, with its gorgeous medieval and baroque centre
- Visit stunning Taormina – one of Italy's most beautiful and stylish hilltop villages
- Guided tour of Piazza Armerina, once completely buried, and a remarkably preserved Roman villa with stunning frescoes and ancient mosaics
- Visit to Mount Etna – Europe's largest active volcano
- Guided tour of Monreale's medieval cathedral with the world's finest mosaics
- Visit to Siracusa – one of the Ancient Greek empire's richest cities and home to Archimedes
- Escorted by our experienced tour manager

TO BOOK: Visit traveledit.co.uk/prima and search **PRCOM** for Lake Como and **PRSIC** for Sicily or call 0871 973 0404** quoting **PMA**.

TERMS & CONDITIONS: *Prices are per person based on two people sharing a twin room. Single rooms and optional insurance are available at a supplement. Subject to availability; terms and conditions apply. Images used in conjunction with Riviera Travel. Additional entrance costs may apply. These holidays are operated by, and your resulting contract and booking conditions will be with, Riviera Travel, New Manor, 328 Wetmore Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE14 1SP (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430), a company independent of Hearst Magazines UK. **Calls from a BT landline will cost no more than 10p per minute; calls from mobiles and other networks may cost more.

Five-star Madeira

Enjoy a seven-night, all-inclusive stay on this pretty Portuguese island from only £485*



Upgrade
to a superior
sea-view room
from **£7pp**
daily

Gorgeous sea views
from Madeira's Enotel
Lido Resort & Spa

Madeira's first five-star all-inclusive* hotel, the Enotel Lido Resort & Spa, enjoys a privileged location on the south of the island, near Funchal. It overlooks the ocean with easy access to the seafront promenade. Just a short walk from the centre of Funchal, the hotel also offers discounts at nearby golf courses.

YOUR ALL-INCLUSIVE PACKAGE INCLUDES: Breakfast, lunch, snacks and dinner daily, plus local alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks*

PRICE TABLE:

All-inclusive	1 week	10 nights	2 weeks
June (fr.)	£645	£795	£985
July (fr.)	£679	£829	£1,019
August (fr.)	£699	£859	£1,049
September (fr.)	£679	£829	£1,029
October (fr.)	£635	£755	£925
Nov/Dec (fr.)	£485	£649	£789

TO BOOK: Visit traveledit.co.uk/prima and search for MENT98, or call 0843 224 0712**, quoting MENT98

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Stylish reclining chairs & cantilever parasol

From £59.99, plus £3.95 delivery, per chair – or buy two from £99.99

This summer, experience the comfort of a sturdy reclining chair. Soothing and stylish, this zero-gravity chair provides the perfect opportunity to relax in the shade or sun. It has multiple positions, evenly distributing your weight, suspending your body as if in mid-air. It measures L182cm x W65cm x H113cm and can be folded down to L93cm x W86cm x D16cm. Available in green (as shown), red, navy, cream and grey, it's just £59.99, or you can buy two for £99.99.

For extra comfort, an XL chair is also available, with a wider seat measuring 75cm. It's just £69.99, or buy two for £119.99.

Complete the set with the matching foldaway table with recessed drinks holders. It measures L51.5cm x W51.5cm x H50cm and is only £14.99.

The cantilever parasol is available in cream (shown above), green and navy and is £69.99.

The parasol must be weighted down with paving slabs, or with the base that's just £39.99. Parasol covers are only £9.99.

The chairs and table are available in green (as shown above), red, navy, cream, and grey



Visit clifford-james.co.uk/49525 or call 0871 911 7011* quoting 49525. Lines open 8am to 8pm seven days a week.

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Please note delivery is £3.95 per order for this item. *BT landline calls cost 10p a minute; calls from other networks may cost more. Offer subject to availability and open to UK residents only. Please allow seven working days for delivery. If not happy for any reason, return faulty/unused goods in resealed original packaging for a refund or replacement within 14 days. Please note that postage is not refunded on unsuitable items or cancelled orders. Your contract for supply of goods is with BVG Airflo.

Puzzles for you to enjoy

Three pages of fun – with cash prizes to win!

**WIN
£50**

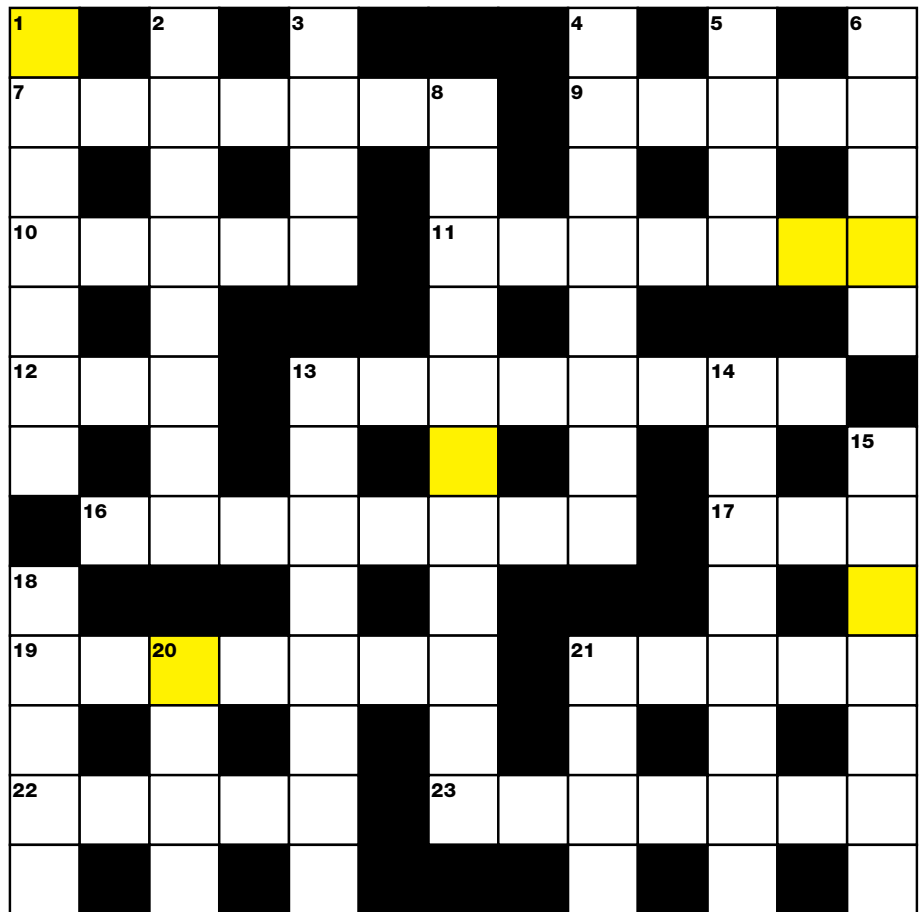
ACROSS

- 7** ____ Mills, the second Mrs Paul McCartney (7)
9 Vital body part? (5)
10 Do extremely well at (5)
11 Put on your glad rags (5,2)
12 ____ your age not your shoe size, expression (3)
13 In Greek mythology, the Muse of epic poetry (8)
16 Chap who does all sorts of odd jobs (8)
17 Ornamental Japanese carp (3)
19 Shoemaker (slang) (7)
21 Spaghetti, linguine or tagliatelle, eg (5)
22 Body's main artery (5)
23 Lie back and think of ____, saying (7)

DOWN

- 1** Ed ____, British singer/songwriter whose multi million-selling album *X* topped the charts in the UK and the US (7)
2 Italian cured belly of pork (8)
3 Indian dish of spiced lentils (4)
4 ____ *Rhapsody*, classic Queen hit (8)
5 Essential for making a soufflé (4)
6 Not appropriate (5)
8 Teaser that takes the format 'My first is in down but not in across, My second' etc (6-2-3)
13 Large luxury car made in the US (8)
14 Country, capital Karachi (8)
15 Prospero's daughter in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (7)
18 Great expanse of sea (5)
20 His ____ is worse than his bite, expression (4)
21 Clothes line clips (4)

CROSSWORD



13 DOWN



5 DOWN



21 DOWN

Call with your answer on **0901 609 4220***

Solve the crossword in the usual way. When completed correctly, the yellow squares, reading top to bottom, left to right, will spell out your prize answer (Impressive, 6). **Call 0901 609 4220*** and leave your name, address and the answer. All calls cost 61p per minute and should last no longer than two minutes. Calls from mobiles and some networks may cost more. You can also write in – see [HOW TO ENTER](#) (on the following page). ➔

WIN
£50

CODEWORD

For £50, see if Ringo Starr can help you work out the number code for each letter of the alphabet. We've placed the letter R, now you do the same with the letters I, N, G and O, and on you go. When you're done, use your key grid to find out the prize word. **Call 0901 609 4221*** and leave your name, address and the answer. All calls cost 61p per minute and should last no longer than two minutes. Calls from mobiles and some networks may cost more. You can also write in – see **HOW TO ENTER** (below).

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K
L
M
N
O
P
Q
R
S
T
U
V
W
X
Y
Z

16	25	25	2	10		18		7	23	17	8	18
18		16		15	26	14	3	16		16		23
19	16	1	R	17	16		22		9		1	R
14				25	15	23	17	9		22		7
24	16	2		18	25		14		14	21	23	11
				14	5	3		1	R	14		10
1	R	14	13	14	1	R		10	2	3	14	8
			23		9		14		3			23
9	2	3	4	5					4	5	2	3
5		4			21					3		16
12		23							24		11	17
5	23	18	25	18					5	6	2	20
	18			16		9		17		4		
17	14	11	16	6		14		16	17	5	3	4
14		14		20		4	23	3				
11	1	R	16	17	16	1	R	2	3	13	14	1
2			11		25	15	23	11	18			15
10	16	8			2		11		2	17	8	6
16		16			5	1	R	4	16	3		14
6	2	3	14	3			14		4	6	16	12



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
R	I	N	G	O								
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

YOUR KEY GRID:

10	1	5	22	23	14	25

Call with your answer on **0901 609 4221***

HOW TO ENTER

***YOU CAN CALL WITH YOUR ANSWERS** (see numbers with the Win £50 puzzles), leaving your name and address. Or you can write in – send your answer on a postcard with your contact details to: Prima Extra Puzzles, /PUPRAN15176 (for the Crossword), /PUPRAN15177 (for the Codeword) or /PUPRAN15178 (for the Arrow-word), The Data Solutions Centre, Worksop S80 2RT.

The closing date is midnight, 31 July 2015 (three working days later for postal entries). If you call to enter after the closing date, you will not be entered but you will be charged. The competition is open to UK residents only and the usual rules apply.

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LAST MONTH'S JUST FOR FUN SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU

6	7	3	8	9	1	4	5	2
4	2	9	6	5	3	8	1	7
5	1	8	4	2	7	9	6	3
2	9	5	7	3	8	6	4	1
7	4	6	9	1	2	3	8	5
3	8	1	5	6	4	2	7	9
8	6	2	1	7	9	5	3	4
1	3	4	2	8	5	7	9	6
9	5	7	3	4	6	1	2	8

EASY PEASY

9	2	6	1	3	4	5	8	7
4	8	5	7	2	6	1	3	9
7	1	3	9	5	8	4	6	2
3	7	9	2	4	5	8	1	6
6	5	2	3	8	1	7	9	4
8	4	1	6	7	9	2	5	3
2	3	8	5	9	7	6	4	1
1	9	4	8	6	2	3	7	5
5	6	7	4	1	3	9	2	8

TOUGH STUFF

APRIL 2015 PRIZE SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD Message **CODEWORD** Liqueur
ARROW-WORD China

* Solutions to this month's prize-winning puzzles will be in the October 2015 issue.

WIN
£50

ARROW-WORD

Put your feet up and win
£50 at the same time!

Fill in the grid according to the arrows. When done, the shaded yellow squares will reveal the answer to the following question:
Lachanophobia is the irrational fear of what? (10)

Hot variety of pepper		Ancient		Defective item	Genuine, authentic	Works wool		Top card		Frankenstein's helper	Ranger, Western character	Chum, mate		Conviction		Storey		... end, cut of lamb neck
								Scouse entertainer (5,5)										
Kids, young people		Expected				De Niro, film star		Sense of self				Zodiac Lion				Express tiredness		Not as many as, fewer
				Vader, Star Wars villain						Lowest whole number			Faithful, true					
Travel by plane		Go over the main points			Angeles city in California			Wrath, fury				Desert hallucination						
				Farmhouse cooker	Second planet from the sun							Guards and protects	Lugholes!		Fencing sword		Cameron, US film star	
Three Blind rhyme	Sign of the Water Carrier	Stone Age dwelling																
												Premiership football team	Card matching game		Roman God of water and of the sea		Drunk (slang)	
Football head coach		Huff and puff to catch your breath																
				Plague, bedevil	Change, modify			Tiny morsel of food										
												Atishoo!						
Small mug		Paul McCartney's instrument						Tall castle building	The Wizard of Oz dog	Treasure trunk	3D square	Titchmarsh, TV gardener		Prayer leader in a mosque		Cry of woe!		
						Fabric, material					Country's main city							
Mischievous sprite in The Tempest		Mix with a spoon						Dreadful, very bad						Donkey/horse hybrid				
								Aids a criminal										
Indian currency unit		Snare						Decayed						Dirty or untidy state				

Join in
and WIN
£50

Fill in the answers to the clues and the letters in the 10 shaded squares will spell out your prize answer

Call 0901 609 4222* and leave your name, address and the answer. All calls cost 61p per minute and should last no longer than two minutes. Calls from mobiles and some networks may cost more. You can also write in – see [HOW TO ENTER](#) (opposite page).

Call with your answer on
0901 609 4222*

5	9	7	2	6				
			1	5	3	7		4
4	3	1				2	6	5
			5		1	3	8	6
	2	5	8		7	9	4	
1	8	3	6		9			
8	4	9				6	3	2
7		6	3	9	2			
				8	6	1	7	9

EASY PEASY

4	2					1	7	
6	7		1		3	9		
			8	2	7	6		
				6		8	5	4
5			4	8	9			7
8	3	4		1				
			6	2	5	4		
			1	9		8		3
	5	7					2	8

TOUGH STUFF

SUDOKU

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Just for
FUN

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Your Stars for July



with
Lori Reid



Cancer

22 June - 23 July

A new cycle begins this month. You're dynamic, determined and decisive. From the start, you're making big changes, so end any situations that no longer work. Relationship-wise, you're moving to the next level and taking no nonsense on the 2nd, 14th and 15th. After the 19th, pressure eases at work.

Leo

24 July - 23 August

With Venus in your sign, you're looking sensational. However, physically, your vitality may be a little under par through the first fortnight. Take time out between the 13th and 15th – a little pampering wouldn't go amiss. The 23rd renews confidence and opens your heart to love.

Virgo

24 August - 23 September

Life this month is full, fast and fascinating. There are new people to meet so mix, mingle and be the life and soul of the party. But watch out for ruffled feathers on the 13th, 14th and 15th! By the 25th, you're tired of all the cavorting and need time to yourself. A romantic retreat could be the perfect thing.

Libra

24 September - 22 October

Others are on holiday, but at home, you're minding the fort. You're busy thinking about your goals and ambitions and pushing to improve your status and position at work. Dig in and work hard after the 18th, even if it means going it alone. Socially and romantically, life picks up at the end of the month.



Scorpio

23 October - 22 November

Travel beckons this month. But with choppy waters between the 13th and 19th, it won't all be plain sailing. If you're up for an adventure, you'll be in your element, but take extra care with your health. On the 23rd, you'll hang up your flip-flops and concentrate on getting ahead at work. By the end of July, the spotlight is on you.

Sagittarius

23 November - 22 December

You're aching to break out and do something liberating, but a busy spell between the 8th and 22nd keeps you pinned down. Expect the week from the 13th to be fraught – whether sorting out financial affairs or dealing with children. Difficulties ease on the 20th, work picks up and you're talking to the right people. On the 23rd, you're ready to spread your wings and fly.

Capricorn

23 December - 20 January

You're flat out as the month begins and, with tensions in the air, you may be a little tender and emotional. As July progresses, partnerships are in focus and passion grows. From the 18th, the world is your oyster – perfect for that romantic getaway. But go easy on spending or you could be shocked by the bill on the 31st.

Aquarius

21 January - 19 February

Take a breather in the first week of July as, from the 8th, you're busy, busy, busy! Things have been piling up and it's time to roll up your sleeves. Start a fresh task, ask for a promotion or apply for a new job on the 16th. Professionally and romantically, you have great support. Joint affairs, money and business prosper through the second fortnight.

Pisces

20 February - 20 March

July fizzes with friends, leisure pursuits and creative activities. Visitors, day trips, picnics and parties light up your summer. Keep an eye on possessions on the 13th, add extra time for travel on the 14th and don't impulse buy on the 19th. From the 20th, romance fills your senses and you're hugging yourself with joy.

Aries

21 March - 20 April

Prepare for a non-stop month as your prospects rise. Top priorities are taking charge and making an impression. Entertaining visitors, redecorating or looking for your dream home? It's all happening now. The pace settles after the 25th. Then, on the 31st, a special someone enters your life.

Taurus

21 April - 20 May

July is the time to make your mind up. Conversations and meetings inspire new ideas and interests. They also create opportunities for romantic connections. But it's home that gladdens your heart throughout the first fortnight. Your social life comes alive on the 18th and you set out to have some fun.

Gemini

21 May - 21 June

This month, motivator Mars is increasing your drive to up your earnings. Though you're digging deep on the 2nd, chances are you could find a new source of income after the 16th. Trips, long and short, put a spring in your step. It's delightful at home in the second week, but you're back on the road by the end of July.

'I'll let you in on my confidence tricks'

Listen up... our columnist Caroline Quentin shares her secrets for coping with nerves



Maria in the *The Sound of Music* once sang: 'I have confidence in sunshine, I have confidence in rain... I have confidence in confidence alooowne. Besides what you see, I have confidence in ME!' I've always thought that this was a remarkable sentiment, even coming from a novice nun who'd led a hitherto understandably cloistered existence. Perhaps only the young and inexperienced can be entirely confident – they haven't yet experienced the pitfalls and brickbats that haunt adult life. It's easier to be gung-ho when you haven't yet made an arse of yourself with alarming regularity. As we get older, the memories of earlier mistakes tend to put a dent in youthful brio.

People assume that because of my job, I must be naturally confident. But it's not true. In my work as an actor and presenter, I have to appear confident when sometimes I'm not.

Of course, we all know people who are brimming over with confidence. But I find these people a bit odd. Nothing seems to break through their tough carapace. They seem to suffer no nerves, regardless of the

situation they're in, contrary to most of us who have numerous moments of self-doubt.

It's difficult to cope with those brazen types who never seem to question their ability to perform brilliantly. Then again, what is scary to one person, is easy for another; a walk in the park is terrifying to an agoraphobic, whereas an agoraphobic might be unfazed by being trapped in a small space – something a claustrophobic would be totally floored by.

You see my point? Confidence comes with territory. I've happily performed at The Comedy Store in front of a heckling crowd, yet giving a speech at a friend's wedding recently had me dry retching with nerves. It doesn't seem to make sense does it? Perhaps confidence is complex and not necessarily rational.

FINDING WAYS TO COPE

I recently met a nurse, at a hospice in Bristol, who cares for cancer patients in what is often the last few weeks of their lives. Nursing the terminally ill requires real courage, yet this same incredible nurse shook like a leaf when we were interviewed for local TV and said she thought I was brave for doing it for a living!

We find different ways of coping with nerves. Some giggle, some chatter, and I have a friend who becomes entirely mute! There are ways to combat butterflies: exercise; meditation; herbal remedies; a nip of the strong stuff. But over the years, I've learned to do something quite simple. I stop thinking about myself and think about the other people – it's amazing how quickly my nerves disappear. If I see the person next to me is shaking like a leaf and I help them relax, it makes me forget my fear as I focus on making them feel better instead.

If I look out into an auditorium and my voice wobbles, I imagine someone out there in the darkness has had a terrible day or bad news and I think about giving them a good night out.

So, if you're facing something scary, take a look at those around you, squeeze a hand, give a reassuring smile and I promise you'll feel better. If that fails, take a deep breath, knock back a stiff drink and imagine everyone in the room is stark naked. You may be shaking, but at least you'll have a smile on your face!

This MONTH...

I'm making



A wind chime out of some cutlery I found in a charity shop. It looks pretty and sounds it, too.

I'm baking



Healthy breakfast muffins as they're delicious and good for you – a winning combo!

I'm growing



Sweet peas, which were my grandmother's favourite. And now they're mine!

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